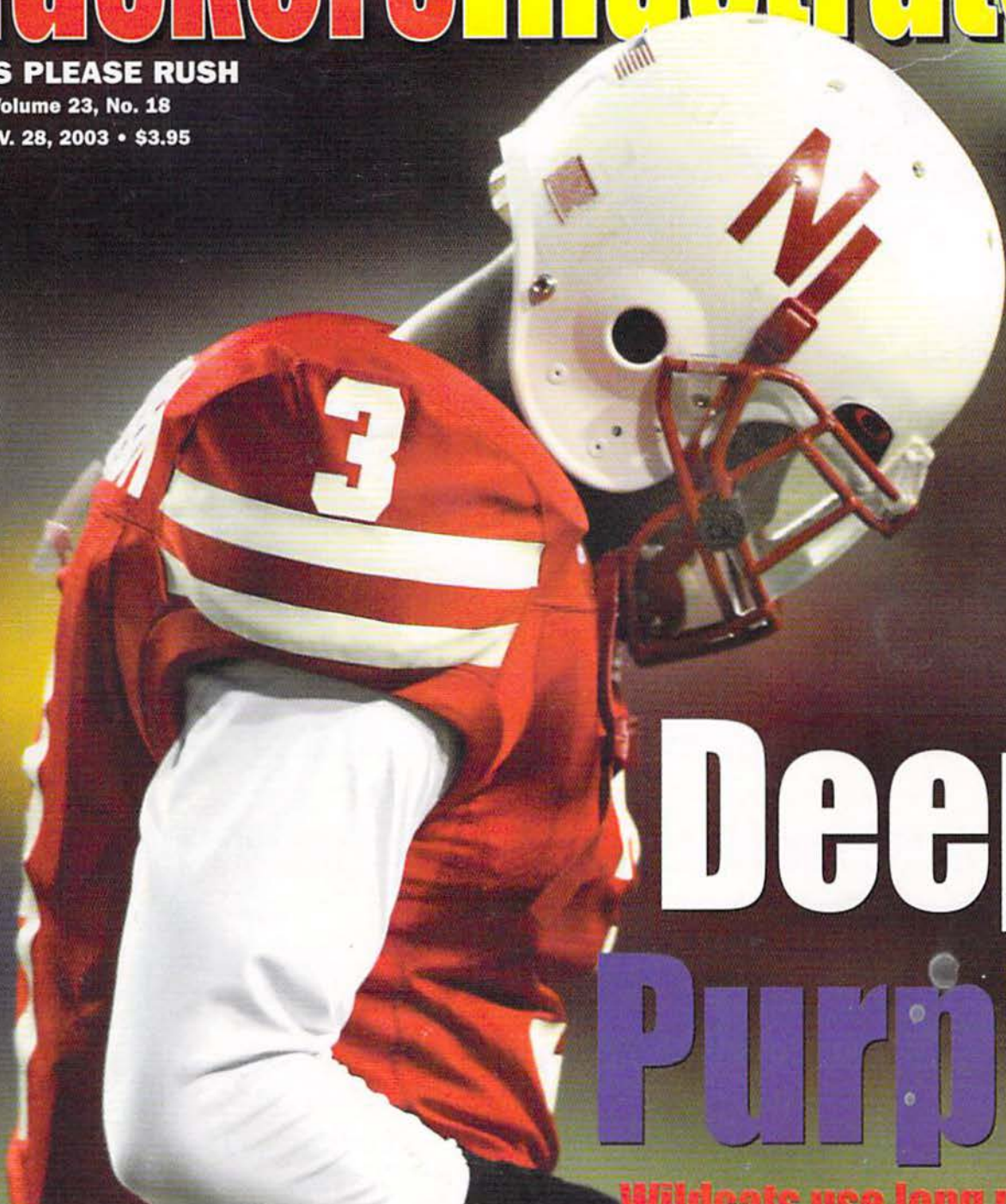


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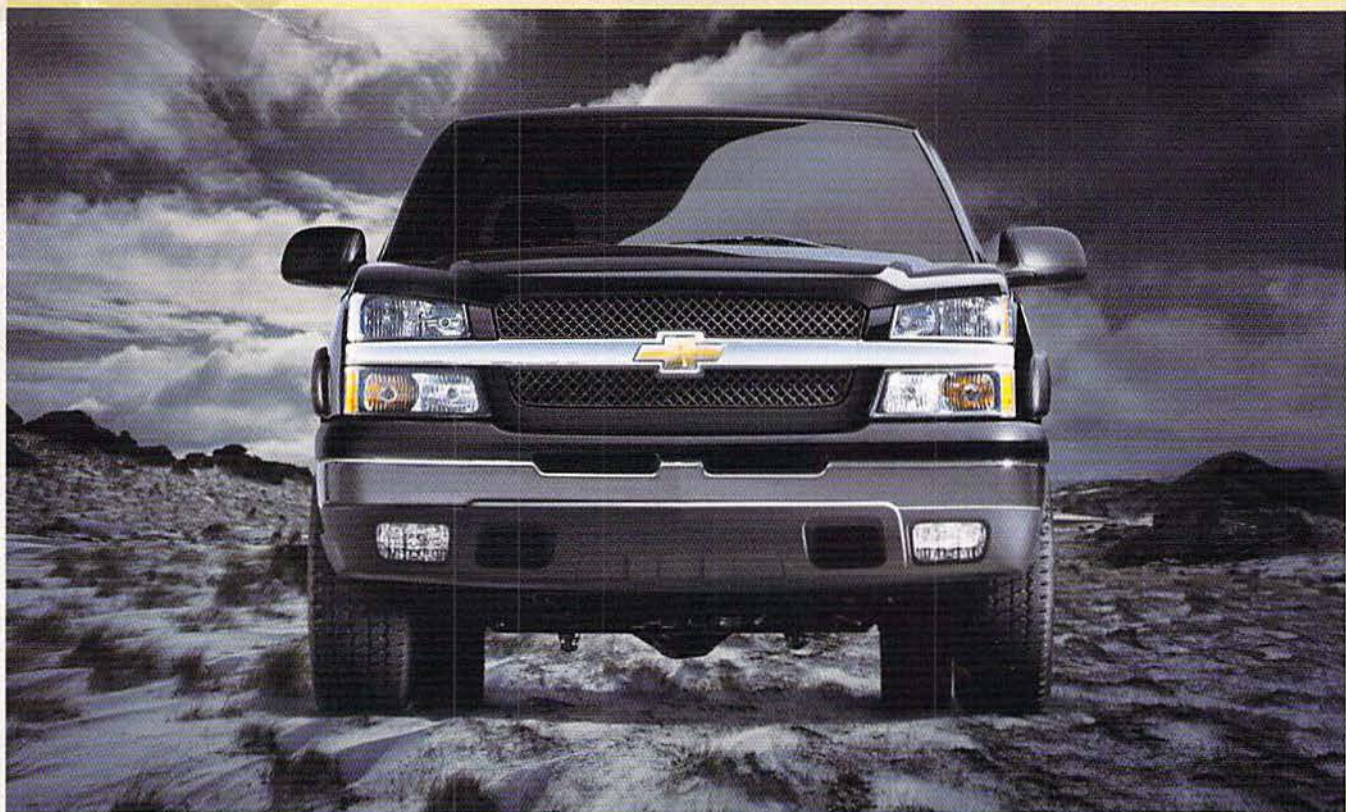
Deep Purple

**Wildcats use long passes
to pull away from Huskers**



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5/02

Big Plays, Big Loss

*Kansas State pulls away in second half
to hand Huskers worst home loss since 1958*



**Brian
HILL**

IT'S ALL ABOUT making plays.

Kansas State quarterback Ell Roberson throws a long pass to wide receiver James Terry. Nebraska cornerback Pat Ricketts tips the football, but Terry still catches it for a 40-yard gain. Two plays later, tailback Darren Sproles is not to be denied and scores on a 22-yard tackle-breaking run late in the first quarter. Kansas State 7, Nebraska 0.

Fast forward to the third quarter.

Nebraska wide receiver Isaiah Fluellen runs past the K-State secondary but can't catch up to a long pass from Jammal Lord. Two plays later, Lord is blindsided by KSU line-backer Bryan Hickman and fumbles. Andrew Shull recovers for the Wildcats at the NU 23.

Four plays later, Roberson takes it in from 11 yards out. Kansas State 14, Nebraska 7.

On the ensuing possession, I-back Cory Ross gains 7 yards on first down. But Ross is stuffed for no gain, Lord is stopped after a 1-yard gain, and the Huskers are forced to punt. The Wildcats drive 70 yards for a field goal to go up 17-7 with 56 seconds remaining in the third quarter.

It's not like the Huskers didn't make any plays. Lord's 6-yard touchdown pass to Mark LeFlore midway through the second quarter, just as the Husker quarterback was being tackled, was a classic. There was also the nifty screen pass that Ross took 26 yards three plays earlier. And there was Josh Bullocks' 10th interception and 41-yard return that set up the scoring drive.

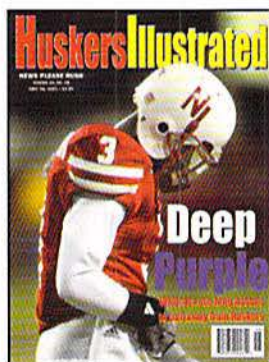
ON THE COVER

Nebraska cornerback Fabian Washington is dejected after Kansas State completed a long touchdown pass. Photo by Scott Bruhn.

But Kansas State made a lot more big plays, including two long scoring passes from Roberson to Terry in the fourth quarter that stunned the 262nd consecutive sellout crowd at Memorial Stadium on Senior Day and eliminated the Huskers from the Big 12 North Division race.

"The third quarter was disastrous, and the fourth quarter didn't get any better," Nebraska Coach Frank Solich said after the Wildcats pulled away for a 38-9 victory, their first win in Lincoln since 1968 and the Huskers' worst home loss since 1958.

If the Husker Nation wasn't already restless, it certainly will be now. It wasn't just the third loss but the decisive margin, which included a scoring drive by K-State's starters against Nebraska's reserves in the final minutes.



Whether or not Kansas State Coach Bill Snyder was making up for years of frustration, he'd have had a little explaining to do if Roberson or Sproles had been injured on that late drive. It wasn't really surprising, as Snyder has a reputation for running it up, and the Huskers have been on the other end of it the last two seasons.

You can read more about the latest setback in this edition of Huskers Illustrated. Our feature story is a look back at the 62-36 "Black Friday" loss at Colorado two years ago that signaled the start of many of the problems for the Nebraska program. The subject of our player profile is Fluellen, who Nebraska coaches went all the way to Germany to lure to Lincoln.

The Husker players and coaches have their work cut out for them if they are to regroup before they head back to Boulder for the regular-season finale the day after Thanksgiving. The Buffaloes went through a huge slump, losing six of seven games, but have righted their ship with wins over Missouri and Iowa State.

It's time for the Huskers to right theirs. ■

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Huskers Illustrated

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No one involved has forgotten what happened at Colorado two seasons ago. Defensive end Trevor Johnson (above), then a sophomore, says the loss was extremely painful. *By Mike Babcock*

NEXT ISSUE

The Colorado review edition will be mailed Dec. 1. Check for updates at huskersillustrated.com.

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'Efficient, Effective'

In September of 1973 in Lincoln, a Chrysler Newport, "fully equipped," had a price tag of \$4,275. A Chevy Caprice, V-8 with power steering, was slightly less expensive at \$3,980.

Major league baseball was heading into the stretch run of a season in which the American League had adopted a designated hitter rule. Pitchers no longer batted, as a matter of course.

Four months earlier, the University of Miami (Florida) had awarded the first intercollegiate scholarship to a female student-athlete, swimmer Lynn Genesko.

And a month later, Vice President Spiro Agnew would resign.

The Nebraska football team had a new head coach, Tom Osborne, and a new locker room, on the lower level of a new South Stadium complex that included offices not only for Osborne and his assistants but also Athletic Director Bob Devaney, the baseball and track and field coaches, the ticket and business managers, the training and equipment staff and the sports information director.

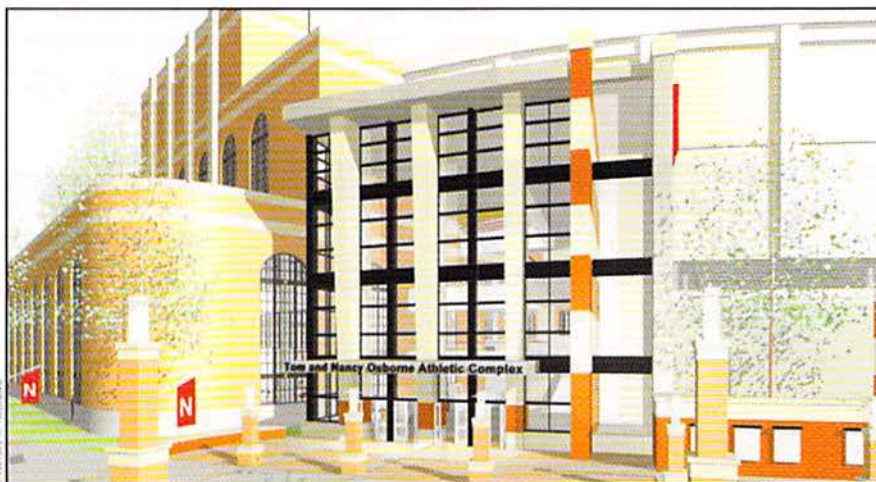
The offices were relocated from the NU Coliseum.

The new complex also provided Memorial Stadium with 9,400 additional seats in the south end zone, increasing the official capacity to 73,650. They had been used during the 1972 season.

A player described the locker room as "luxurious." Unlike its predecessor in the north field house it was air-conditioned. The field house, built in 1946, "had a lot history," the player said.

But its time as home to the varsity players had passed.

Thirty years later, the South Stadium locker room's time has passed. When recruits visit, they are whisked right past it, with door closed, after visiting the training room, on



The Tom and Nancy Osborne Athletic Complex will include a new locker room as well as a training room, weight room and administrative offices.

their way to the academic area in the west stadium. "We have just marched our guys right by it," Coach Frank Solich says.

There was a time when locker rooms weren't that important to the recruiting process. But many schools have begun to showcase them. "They are special now," says Solich.

Facilities don't "automatically" attract recruits, he says. "But I guarantee that it makes a difference to the recruits, and it makes a difference to their parents when they start adding everything up."

With that as a backdrop, Athletic Director Steve Pederson has initiated a \$40-million fund-raising drive to build a new athletic complex at the north end of Memorial Stadium. The Tom and Nancy Osborne Athletic Complex will include a new locker room as well as training room, weight room, indoor practice facility and administrative offices. It also will allow for a 5,000-seat expansion.

In addition to the seating, the proj-

ect will provide a concourse and new restrooms in the North Stadium, and a new HuskerVision replay screen on the North Stadium's rim.

"This project is focused on the people we care about the most, our student-athletes and our fans," Pederson said in announcing the athletic complex project and funding drive.

It will "present a beautiful and unique front door to recruits," he said. "It will be the finest facility in college football and will impact our program for decades to come."

A walkway will attach the Tom and Nancy Osborne Athletic Complex to a new indoor workout facility. Two natural grass fields will be positioned between it and the Cook Pavilion, a shared indoor workout facility built in connection with the student recreation center in 1987.

As many as 10 other varsity sports also will be able to use the new indoor facility.

"We wanted to build a new facility that was both efficient and effective," said Pederson.

"It gives us a state-of-the-art workout facility for our student-athletes and provides our football program with year-round facilities and a home that is second to none."

The South Stadium complex once provided those things. But consider the first game for which the Cornhuskers used the locker room there was Osborne's first game as coach, against UCLA. Memorial Stadium's 60th consecutive sellout was on hand that day. The streak is now 262. ■

TO MAKE A DONATION . . .

In order to raise the \$40 million to fund the complex, "we will need 1.7 million Nebraskans and more," Pederson said. "I am positive that together, we can make this happen."

Donations can be made on line at Huskers.com or by calling 1-800-8 Big RED and using a credit card. Personal checks can be sent to: Husker Nation Championship Drive, P.O. Box 880154,

117 South Stadium, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, NE 68588-0154.

Those who donate \$100 or more will receive a commemorative lapel pin that says "We Are NI!" Donations can be spread over three years and are 100 percent tax deductible if priority points are not assigned. Otherwise, they are 80 percent tax deductible. ■

TOUCHDOWN TOMMIE

Former Nebraska quarterback Tommie Frazier, a first-team All-American and Heisman Trophy runner-up, has returned, joining the Athletic Development Office as a fund raiser, working with current donors and bringing in new ones for all 23 of Nebraska's sports for men and women.

Frazier will serve as assistant director of athletic development and be part of the Husker Nation Championship Drive, raising funds



Tommie Frazier

for the Tom and Nancy Osborne Athletic Complex and stadium expansion. He will work under Paul Meyers, assistant athletic director for development.

Frazier had been working in private business in Omaha since leaving coaching. He was an assistant under Kevin Steele at Baylor for four seasons.

"Tommie is a true competitor and his successes speak for themselves," Athletic Director Steve Pederson said in announcing Frazier's hiring. "The addition of another key player signals the continued championship aspirations of our program."

CARROLL'S ENDORSEMENT

Coach Pete Carroll, who is responsible for turning Southern California into a national title contender, indirectly contributed to Bo Pelini's becoming Nebraska's defensive coordinator.

Former Cornhusker player and assistant coach Monte Kiffin, the defensive coordinator of the Super Bowl champion Tampa Bay Buccaneers, recommended Pelini to Coach Frank Solich. And Carroll recommended Pelini to Kiffin, according to the Lincoln, Neb., Journal Star.

In a recent Journal Star story, Kiffin is quoted as saying that Carroll, who was on defensive staffs with Pelini in San Francisco and New England, told him "you could not find a better guy than Bo."

"I'm not going to recommend a guy if he's not good," Kiffin was quoted in the story.

With the endorsement of Carroll, a respected defensive-minded coach in the NFL, he knew Pelini would be good. But, Kiffin said, Pelini had "exceeded even my expectations."

Kiffin, who lettered at Nebraska from 1961 to 1963, was a defensive assistant when the Blackshirt tradition was being established. He was a full-time assistant for 10 seasons, working with the defensive line and then serving as Tom Osborne's defensive coordinator from 1973 through 1976. ■

QUICK HITS

What's Happening In Nebraska Athletics?

COULD HAVE PLAYED I-BACK

When it comes to running quarterbacks, Nebraska has never had a better one than Jammal Lord. The Cornhuskers' all-time rushing list for quarterbacks will reflect that.

With two regular-season games remaining, Lord was already second on the list, behind Eric Crouch. And for all intents and purposes, he got there in only two seasons.

"I think he's just a physically tough, mentally tough young man with the ball underneath his arms," Coach Frank Solich said recently. "He's got a unique ability to make people miss or power people, and I think that's what causes him to be effective because you're never quite sure when you're coming up to him what he's going to do, whether he's going to just lower it on you and get yards after contact or whether he's going to make you miss and try to make the big play. He's got great instincts."

"We've been blessed with physically tough quarterbacks. I mean, Eric was that way, too. But Jammal takes a backseat to no one on that end of it, on the fact that he's been able to keep himself on the field."

Lord's durability, taking hit after hit, is "a real credit to him," said Solich.

Lord has shown he can put moves on defenders in the open field. "He has running back ability, from instincts, the toughness, to power, to making people miss," Solich said.

"He would be an excellent I-back for you because of all the qualities he has. He's that good of an athlete with the ball under his arm to make the transition. He has that kind of ability."

Lord's size, 6-foot-2 and 220 pounds, has surprised some opposing coaches, said Solich. "They didn't realize how big of an athlete he is until (they) see him warm up in his uniform."

"He's a good-looking player on that end of it."

Career rushing, quarterbacks

1. Eric Crouch	3,434	4. Tommie Frazier	1,955
2. Jammal Lord	*2,338	5. Scott Frost	1,533
3. Steve Taylor	2,125	*through Kansas game	

'ROSIE' RECOLLECTION



Dan Vili Waldrop

Even though Nebraska lost the 2002 Rose Bowl game against Miami 37-14, offensive tackle Dan Vili Waldrop considers the trip to Pasadena one of the highlights of his career.

Vili Waldrop, among the seniors who took their final Tunnel Walk at Memorial Stadium prior to the Kansas State game, went to high school in the greater Los Angeles area, Wilmington, Calif., where the Rose Bowl is king — or, more accurately, "the granddaddy of them all."

The Rose Bowl was long the New Year's Day showcase for the Big Ten and Pac-10 champions. But because of the Bowl Championship Series, that has changed in recent seasons.

So when Vili Waldrop came to Nebraska, he knew there was a chance, though it would be a longshot, to play in the Rose Bowl game.

"My freshman year, I was praying for that. 'God, please let me get to the Rose Bowl and be playing at that time,'" he says. "I got my prayers answered."

When he goes home, he has a Rose Bowl ring and "a little bragging rights," he says.

SUDDEN CHANGE

The defense's uncanny ability to create turnovers has helped the offense, which has had to be prepared to turn around and go back on the field at any time.

An offensive coach can't plan turnovers, of course, "but you've got to plan for sudden changes, be able to have a plan and have your guys ready to go," says offensive coordinator Barney Cotton.

"You're always talking to your players about a sudden change. This year, we've been very fortunate to have to just sit down and (then) run right back out there."

Sudden change as a result of turnovers is the "No. 1 predictor of who wins the game," he says. "There are always things you're going to have in your package" for sudden change.

NOT REALLY GERMAN

Redshirted freshman Isaiah Fluellen was born in Germany and attended his final two years of high school at Ramstein Air Force Base in Germany. He is not German, however. Some people "think I'm foreign but I'm not foreign," he says.

That he can speak German has been the basis for some good-natured joking on the part of his Cornhusker teammates. "They play around with me sometimes," he says.

"They try to speak all this German that's not really German, just nonsense."

Those outside the football program occasionally ask about the quality of competition he faced in the Department of Defense Dependent Schools league in Europe. "I think they underestimate it," he says. "The teams over there are Americans, too, and sometimes the level of competition is high."

Most of the competition was against schools from other bases in Germany, although his team did play a school on a base in England. "I think I had a good football experience in Germany," he says. ■

Tradition, Vision

*Devaney was able to focus state's passion
for university football team*



**Mike
BABCOCK**

FIRST, A BIT OF HISTORY...

"Tippy" Dye had already begun a search for a new football coach when he officially became Nebraska's athletic director on Dec. 1, 1961. Dye, the athletic director at the University of Wichita (now Wichita State) the previous three years, succeeded Joseph Soshnik and Charles Miller, who had shared responsibilities for one year following the departure of Bill

Orwig to Indiana.

Dye's first choice to replace the fired Bill Jennings was Hank Foldberg, his coach at Wichita for two seasons. Foldberg declined Dye's offer, however, going to Texas A&M instead.

That decision proved to be fortunate for Nebraska because Dye would persuade Bob Devaney to leave Wyoming and take charge of the program that had fallen on hard times.

The Cornhuskers had enjoyed only three winning seasons since 1940, when a Biff Jones-coached team earned a trip to the Rose Bowl, the first bowl bid in school history.

Despite those struggles, and encouraged by Michigan State Coach Duffy Daugherty — for whom he had been an assistant — Devaney saw potential at Nebraska.

Daugherty told him he could win a national championship there, something he would never be able to do at Wyoming. And after careful consideration, he agreed. Instead of two decades of frustration, he saw sufficient talent left by Jennings, a proven recruiter, for immediate success.

A dozen players on his first Cornhusker team would be drafted by the two professional leagues operating in 1962. And all but a couple were at Nebraska when he arrived.

Nebraska's problems had to do with organization and motivation, not talent.

Devaney was a visionary, with respect for a tradition that could be traced to the turn of the century, even before the Cornhuskers had been given their nickname. The university football team was the state's passion long before Devaney arrived with his national championship vision.

And he was able to focus that passion like a laser. He was so successful, in fact, that seven years into his tenure as coach, disaffected boosters in Omaha circulated a petition calling for his ouster. After back-to-back 6-4 seasons, those who would have been happy with such a record when he arrived had come to expect Big Eight championships and national title runs every season.

The passion was embodied in Memorial Stadium, which was built in 1923 after what a university student newspaper called a "reawakening of Nebraska spirit" following a

10-0 victory at perennial power Pittsburgh in 1921. The Cornhuskers finished 7-1 and won the Missouri Valley Conference title that season, and repeated in 1922, providing the impetus for the new stadium.

Memorial Stadium would replace Nebraska Field, a wooden structure located roughly where the South Stadium offices and parking lot are now, with a field running east and west.

The new stadium of concrete and steel, to be dedicated to those who fought and died in the "Great War," was to be patterned after the one recently built at Ohio State.

In October of 1922, a fund-raising drive began. University students pledged \$100,000 and private businesses in Lincoln pledged \$200,000 according to the student newspaper.

With such support from the community, ground was broken in late April of 1923. The cornerstone was laid during the university's annual spring roundup, and in mid-October, the Cornhuskers played their first game in the stadium, though it was still under construction.

The dedication game was played a week later, before a crowd reported to be 20,000.

Though he couldn't have cited the facts of the stadium's history, of course, Devaney understood the passion for football that went into its construction four decades before his arrival.

Now, four decades later, another visionary with an appreciation for tradition, Athletic Director Steve Pederson, is implementing a plan dependent on the support of Cornhusker fans.

Some would argue that the time isn't right for a \$40-million fund-raising drive to build an athletic complex to bring the Nebraska football program into the 21st century. The state economy isn't in the best of shape and University of

Nebraska-Lincoln Chancellor Harvey Perlman is making difficult cuts.

Perlman, like Pederson, has vision and sees the urgency in bringing Nebraska's athletic facilities up-to-date. The effects of Cornhusker football transcend the university as well as the sport.

In Nebraska, it has never been just about football. There's more to what happens on Saturday than a 60-minute game, much more. Devaney, a Hall of Fame coach, understood that, as did his handpicked successor Tom Osborne, also a Hall of Famer. And so does Pederson.

From that combination of tradition and vision, the Husker Nation Championship Drive was born. ■



**Steve Pederson has
implemented the
Husker Nation
Championship Drive.**

Mike Babcock is a former sports columnist for the Lincoln Journal Star. He has covered Nebraska football for more than 20 years. Mike can be reached at MBABCOCK1@neb.rr.com or P.O. Box 6782, Lincoln, NE 68506.

Working His Way Up

Former Husker pitcher Spiehs doesn't allow himself much time to dream about his ultimate goal



Terry DOUGLASS

BEING THE PLAYER TO BE NAMED LATER, facing hitters with lightning-quick bat speed and enduring horrific road trips have certainly been eye-openers. But as he prepares for his third season of professional baseball, not much has changed about R.D. Spiehs.

The former Nebraska pitcher still carries the same happy-go-lucky attitude he brought to the ballpark during his American Legion playing days in Grand Island. Just as it was while

he compiled a 21-6 career record with the Cornhuskers, Spiehs welcomes a good conversation, and his candor is refreshing.

For instance, take Spiehs' view on chasing his dream of pitching in the major leagues:

"They're going to have to take the ball away from me," Spiehs said. "I'm never going to hang my cleats up on my own terms. I'm going to go as long I can at this."

Yep, same old R.D.

The ex-catcher turned rubber-armed workhorse for Nebraska's pitching staff appears to be doing pretty well for himself these days.

This fall has found Spiehs back in Lincoln taking classes to "chop away" at his degree. His major is Communications and his minor is Sociology, but Spiehs makes no bones about the fact that he wants a diploma so that he can one day be a college coach.

Spiehs, who left following his junior season in 2001 after being drafted in the 33rd round by the San Francisco Giants, still maintains contact with the Huskers. He started working out four times a week at Haymarket Park in early November and can conveniently be found when NU pitching coach Rob Childress wants him to offer a young player a few pointers on the art of throwing a nasty slider.

That's just fine with Spiehs.

"I do what I can," Spiehs said. "I teach it how I see and I really enjoy it."

"It's good getting some experience on the coaching part of it, and it's also good to interact with the guys."

For now, Spiehs' coaching aspirations are on hold as he's trying to work his way up in the San Diego Padres organization. He finished last season with the Mobile (Ala.) BayBears, the Padres' Double-A affiliate in the Southern League, and was 0-2 with a 5.30 ERA while making 15 relief appearances in the club's last 28 games.

Spiehs started his 2003 season pitching for the Giants' Double-A Norwich team in the Eastern League. There, he appeared in 39 games as a reliever, posted a 2-5 record with seven saves and a 3.28 ERA, allowing just five earned runs in his last 40 innings.

However, just when it seemed things were going so well, Spiehs found out the rumors he'd be hearing about possibly being traded weren't just clubhouse chatter. He was packing for a seven-day roadtrip on July 28 when he was informed that he'd have three hours to catch a flight to join his new team.

Welcome to professional baseball. Just when Spiehs felt like

he was getting the hang of things and carving his place in the organization, he had to start all over again.

"I definitely liked the Giants organization and all their coaches and front-office people," Spiehs said. "I guess it's kind of like having your whole life in one city, then packing up, moving, meeting everybody new and you have to re-establish yourself."

However, Spiehs was encouraged that Giants' personnel people he trusted told him he might have a better chance for advancement with the Padres.

"Sooner than later with the Padres was what they said," Spiehs said. "All in all, I think it was a good thing."

"I fit in well, and their organization was a lot like the Giants, so I was happy about that."

Perhaps, a more telling sign of what the Giants and Padres think of Spiehs' potential is the fact that both asked him to play in the Arizona Fall League. Childress said the invitation essentially signals that the big club thinks their prospect has big-league potential. Each organization can send only one player in the entire system that is playing below Double-A.

Spiehs got that invite after his 2002 season with the A-League San Jose Giants. Spiehs said the Fall League was clearly a showcase for talent, as 10 of his 25 teammates got called up to the major leagues this past September.

"If somebody sees something in you that they like in the Fall League, it can take you farther than a good full season in the minors," Spiehs said.

The Padres called Spiehs this fall and asked him to play in the Fall League again, but the club's general manager changed his mind when he learned that Spiehs had already started classes at UNL.

Spiehs admits he was hesitant to turn down the opportunity to show what he could do but has now set his sights on spring training in March. There, he hopes to continue his rapid growth as a pitcher.

"I'm going to say about 110 percent," Spiehs said when asked how much he's improved since college.

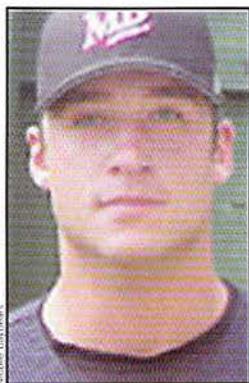
"Coming in to Nebraska as a catcher, I had to start from the bottom and lay all the foundation for fundamentals with coach Childress. In pro ball, it's just refining all the little things."

Although just one level separates Spiehs from his goal of playing in the major leagues, the 6-foot-3, 215-pound right-hander doesn't allow himself much time to dream.

"I actually try not to think about it," Spiehs said. "You hear stories and see guys who come right out of college and go right to the big leagues. And then, I played with a guy this year who was in Double-A when he was 19 years old, and he's 23 and he's still never been above it."

Still, Spiehs maintains a positive outlook.

"I think I'm on the upward plane now," he said. "Every time I have success and things go the way I want them to, it just kind of makes me strive a little bit harder to attain my goal." ■



R.D. Spiehs finished last season with the Mobile (Ala.) BayBears.

Terry Douglass is the sports editor of the Grand Island Independent. He can be reached at tdbdouglass@earthlink.net.

PLAYER PROFILE

Unlikely Choice?

Unexpected connections led Fluellen from Germany to Nebraska

By Mike Babcock

The story of Isaiah Fluellen's recruitment "almost seems far-fetched," Nebraska receivers coach Ron Brown says. But "it's fascinating, and it's the truth."

That Fluellen would find his way from Ramstein Air Force Base near Landstuhl, Germany, to Nebraska is unlikely, "on paper, a million-to-one odds," says Brown. "But when you look at all the circumstances surrounding the process, it was a hands-down no-brainer."

The story's condensed version begins with a youth pastor on a United States military base in Germany three or four years before the Cornhuskers began recruiting Fluellen, a two-time male athlete of the year among students at Department of Defense Dependent Schools (DODDS) in Europe.

Fluellen's father Melvin is an Air Force chaplain.

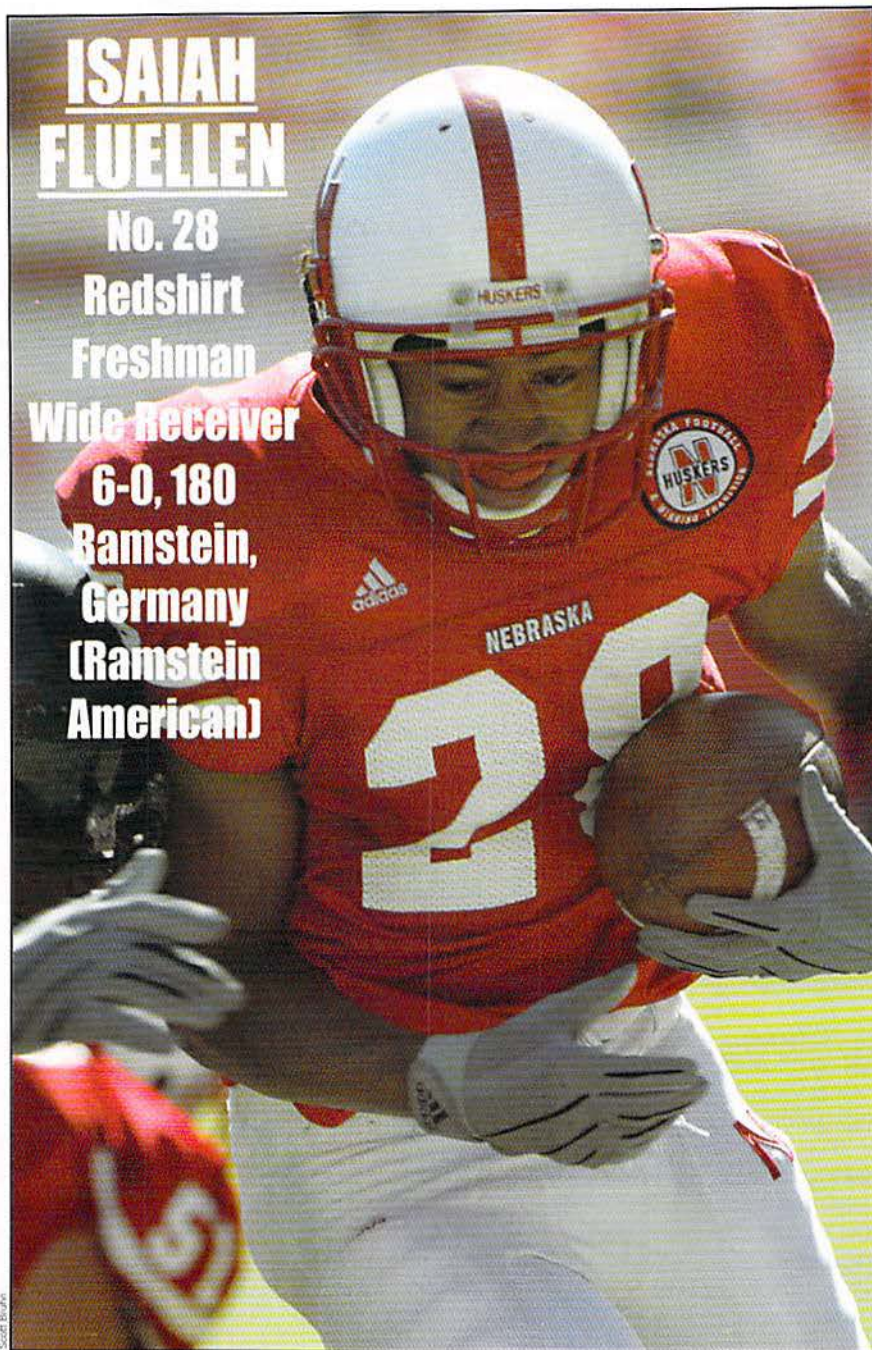
Fluellen, who was born in Germany, spent his junior and senior years at Ramstein American High School, after beginning high school in Dayton, Ohio, and living in South Carolina and Georgia before that. Growing up in a military family, he is accustomed to such moves.

Until he began high school, his athletic interest was baseball. He didn't start playing organized football until he was a ninth-grader in Dayton — he made the varsity.

**ISAIAH
FLUELLEN**

**No. 28
Redshirt
Freshman
Wide Receiver**

**6-0, 180
Ramstein,
Germany
(Ramstein
American)**



In any case, the youth pastor heard Brown "giving a message" on an international Christian radio broadcast, Brown says, and "prayed about" having him speak to the pas-

tor's youth group."

Given the circumstances, "it seemed like a far-out plan," says Brown.

But a couple of years later, he was

in Germany to visit Fluellen, after Nebraska became interested as a result of videotape brought back by Billy Maxwell, a Cornhusker track and field coach.

Fluellen also excelled as a sprinter. He was the fastest high school athlete on American military bases in Europe, winning three gold medals at the DODDS Division I championships.

Nebraska wasn't the only major football program interested in him. "If the kid had lived in the United States, he would have had all kinds of choices," Brown says. But the Cornhuskers were the only one "nuts enough" to fly to Germany to visit in the aftermath of the horrific events that were 9-11.

As it turned out, the youth pastor who had heard Brown's message on the radio was Fluellen's youth pastor. So Brown spoke at his church before visiting Fluellen's family.

The unexpected connections didn't end with that. Brown and Melvin Fluellen were the same age, born on the same day in fact. Both had Tennessee roots, says Brown, and "we're both Christians."

Fluellen and his parents were

looking at football programs with pass-oriented offenses, among them Maryland, which had a "four-receiver offense, winging it around," Brown says.

Again, Nebraska seemed an unlikely choice. But "my parents really liked Coach Brown, the whole situation," says Fluellen. Plus, Coach Frank Solich would go to Germany, too.

"They were the only ones that sent coaches," Fluellen says.

Another factor not to be ignored was Fluellen's host on his visit to Nebraska, which required an 8-hour flight from Frankfurt, Germany, to Chicago and then on to Lincoln — DeJuan Groce.

He and Groce "had a lot of things in common," says Fluellen.

Groce also had lived on a military base in Germany, as well as in Ohio.

"DeJuan was the perfect host," Brown says of the former Cornhusker All-American, now with the NFL's St. Louis Rams. "DeJuan is one of the friendliest yet up-front people that you'll meet, and I think Isaiah and he hit it off really well, so everything was pointing in that direction."

Fluellen was hampered by hamstring problems as a freshman red-shirt, and he got off to a slow start this season as a result. But he had climbed to the top of the depth chart by the Kansas game, showing big-play capabilities not only as a deep-threat receiver but also as a runner on reverses.

That Fluellen is at Nebraska has nothing to do with coincidence as far as Brown is concerned. "Every time I see that kid doing something on the football field, I see the reality of God," Brown says. "My faith grows stronger because I'm reminded of the whole process that took place."

"It's much bigger than Isaiah or any of us. It's just part of the plan."

Oh yes, Fluellen's parents can watch him play now because his father was transferred to Offutt Air Force Base in Bellevue, Neb., last spring. Two of Fluellen's younger brothers, Silas and J.T., attend Bellevue West High School. The other, Melvin, attends the University of Georgia.

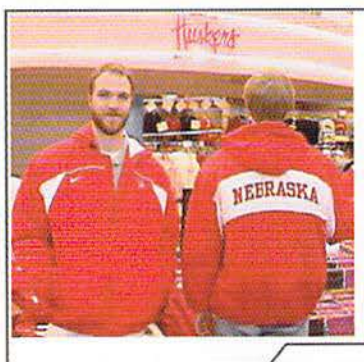
His father transfers "every three years," says Isaiah, "and one of his requests was for Offutt because I was here. The request went through." ■

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Boulder Bull

Nebraska's last visit to Colorado hard to forget

By Mike Babcock

In athletics, one has to move forward, not look back. But no one involved has forgotten what happened at Colorado two seasons ago, no matter how hard they might have tried.

The 62-36 loss in Boulder left an imprint on Nebraska's psyche. The Cornhusker players and coaches who were there have carried a burden that has yet to be lifted. The effects of the loss could be seen in last season's 7-7 record, and they could be seen in the changes that followed.

"That was one of the hardest losses I can remember," says Trevor Johnson, Nebraska's senior defensive end and co-captain. "Since I've been here, that's one of the hardest losses I think we seniors have dealt with, especially coming in undefeated. It was completely unexpected."

The Cornhuskers went to Colorado with an 11-0 record and a

FEATURE STORY

No. 2 national ranking, heading for the Big 12 championship game and then on to a national title game in the Rose Bowl.

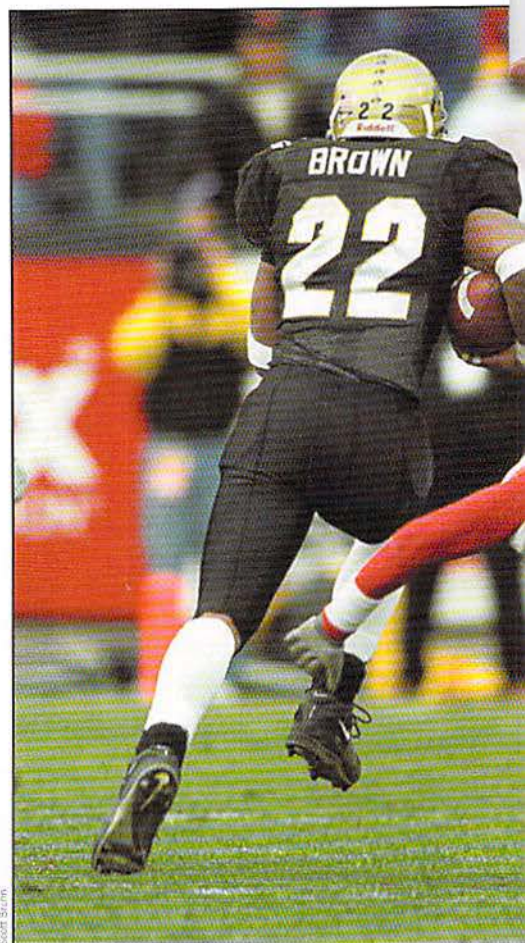
They still went to the Rose Bowl, through a quirk in the BCS system. But claims to the contrary, they went without the confidence that has characterized Nebraska football for four decades.

The way they lost at Colorado was a humbling experience, to say the least.

Johnson was a third-year sophomore, in his first season as a rush end. He was a back-up and played mostly on special teams. Toward the end, however, "they were throwing me in," he says.

The experience was "definitely" among the low points of his career.

For all intents and purposes, his career was just beginning that sea-



son. He had moved from tight end to rush end in the spring of 2001, basically trading places with walk-on Kyle Ringenberg.

The transition from offense to defense was slow and difficult, and not the most pleasant of memories. But Johnson persisted and looked to the future instead of what had been.

"I felt I had all the time in the world to do stuff," he says.

Two years can pass quickly, however, when you're doing something of which you have dreamed since your earliest recollections. And Nebraska football was Johnson's dream.

Growing up in Lincoln, after being born in Gordon, Neb., the Cornhuskers were his passion. He was a football fan, without a favorite

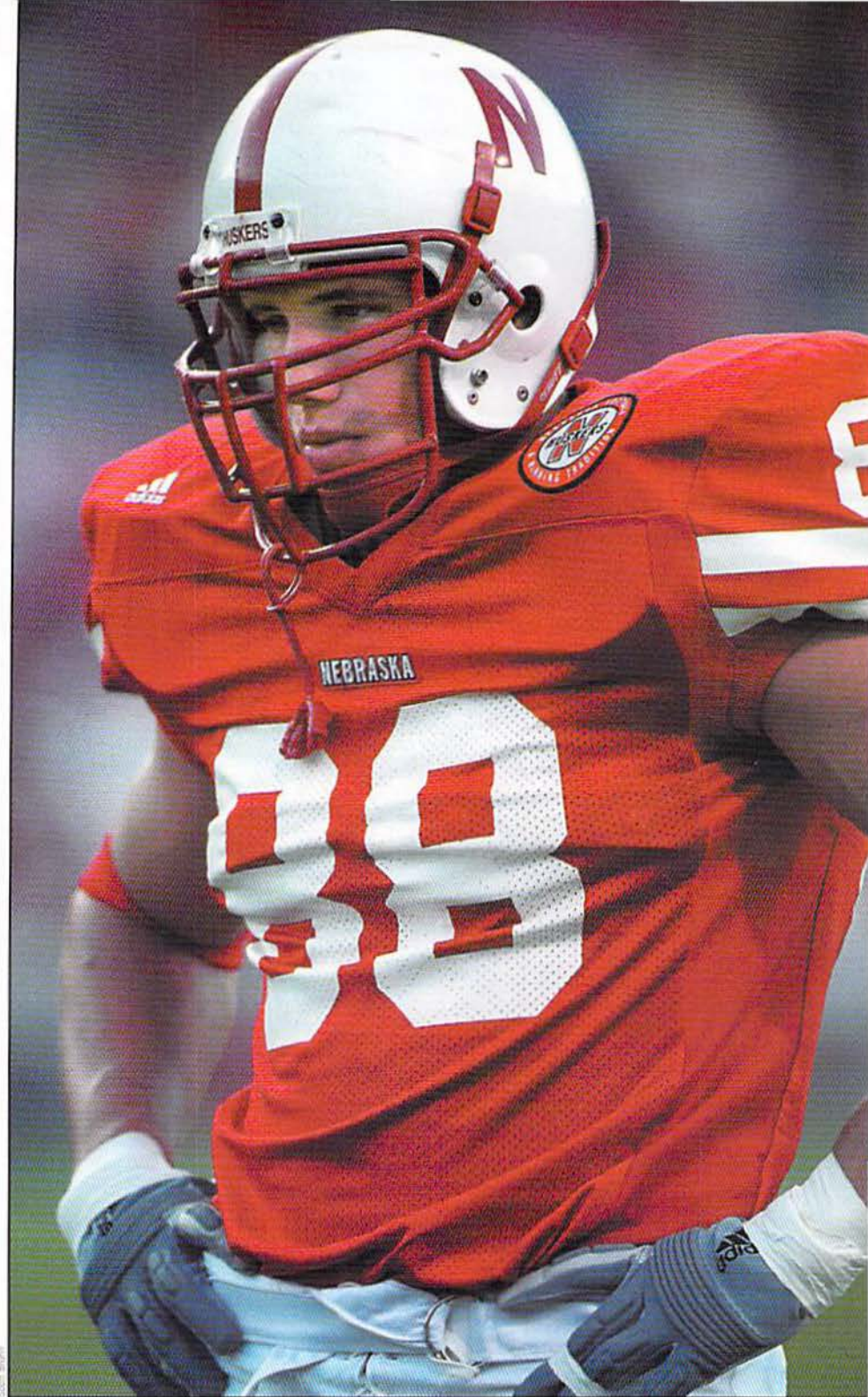
"That was one of the hardest losses I can remember . . . It was completely unexpected."

— Defensive end Trevor Johnson on NU's 62-36 loss at Boulder on Nov. 23, 2001

arden



Nebraska couldn't stop Colorado tailback Chris Brown (above), who rushed for 198 yards and six touchdowns — three in the fourth quarter — in the Buffaloes' 62-36 victory in the 2001 game at Boulder. Then sophomore Trevor Johnson (right), in his first season as a back-up rush end, played mostly on special teams but "they were throwing me in" toward the end of the game.



professional team. "It was always about Nebraska," he says.

"Everything was Nebraska. With all my friends it was about Nebraska. My whole family, where I'm from, where I grew up, everywhere I've been, it was always about Nebraska.

"I had all the Husker gear, and I was just crazy about Nebraska."

Now, his Cornhusker career is winding down. The end is staring

him in the face. He has played his final game at Memorial Stadium, and he'll be finished in a month and a half.

It's no time to be sentimental about his final days in a Nebraska uniform, and there's no danger of that, really. But "it's something you think about," he says. "It's a weird feeling, kind of a sad feeling. It's really sad to see it's winding down

because I care so much about this program.

"In the past five years, I've poured my heart into it."

That's why the Colorado loss two years ago was so painful, and why last season's .500 record was disappointing. After that, the team found itself at a crossroads.

The choice was clear, of course. One way wasn't an option. "We saw

we could go two directions from that point, and we wanted to get better, be the best team out there," says Johnson.

"We were going to set the standard higher. We wanted a great year."

It "hasn't been perfect like we planned," he says. But it's a step in the right direction, particularly if the Cornhuskers can play well at Colorado, where many of their problems began.

Despite what Johnson has accomplished, he has endured tough times.

Even though he was slowed by injury early in the season, he leads the down linemen in tackles. And he

hasn't missed a start.

In that sense, his experience is like that of others. "When you play football, you're going to be faced with a lot of adversity," he says. "A lot of bad things are going to happen. It's not always easy and it's not always fun. But throughout, I've got only the best memories during my time here."

Johnson has become more assertive as he has matured in the program. Like his teammates, he excelled at the high school level, as much a result of athletic ability as hard work.

He worked "extremely hard" in high school, "but I wasn't real assertive," he says. "Things just kind

of came my way a little bit more. I don't know. I can't really explain it. But here, you've really got to make things happen for yourself. You've got to go out and be the aggressor."

He learned that lesson well enough to realistically consider continuing his playing career in the NFL. When he came to Nebraska, the road to the NFL seemed long. Not so now.

"I wasn't used to the kind of talent I was exposed to when I got here," he says. "Things just moved at such a faster pace that I couldn't keep up with it very well at first."

He has done more than keep up since settling in at defensive end. "As I matured, I kept raising my goals," he says. "I just got to the point where I thought that (the NFL) might be a realistic goal for me. And then coming into my senior year, it really looked like it could be."

Having talked to former Cornhuskers in the NFL, he understands that the game won't be the same as it has been during his five seasons at Nebraska. But that game hasn't been the same as the one he played at Lincoln Northeast High, which wasn't the same as the one he played in Midget League.

"Every level does kind of have its own special appeal," he says. "It becomes more businesslike every level you step up. I talk to guys in the NFL, people that I've known that played here, and they say, 'Enjoy the rest of the time you've got there because when you come here, it's all business.'"

The Colorado trip represents business left unfinished two years ago for Nebraska's seniors. And it represents one of the final steps of a journey that captured Johnson's youthful imagination.

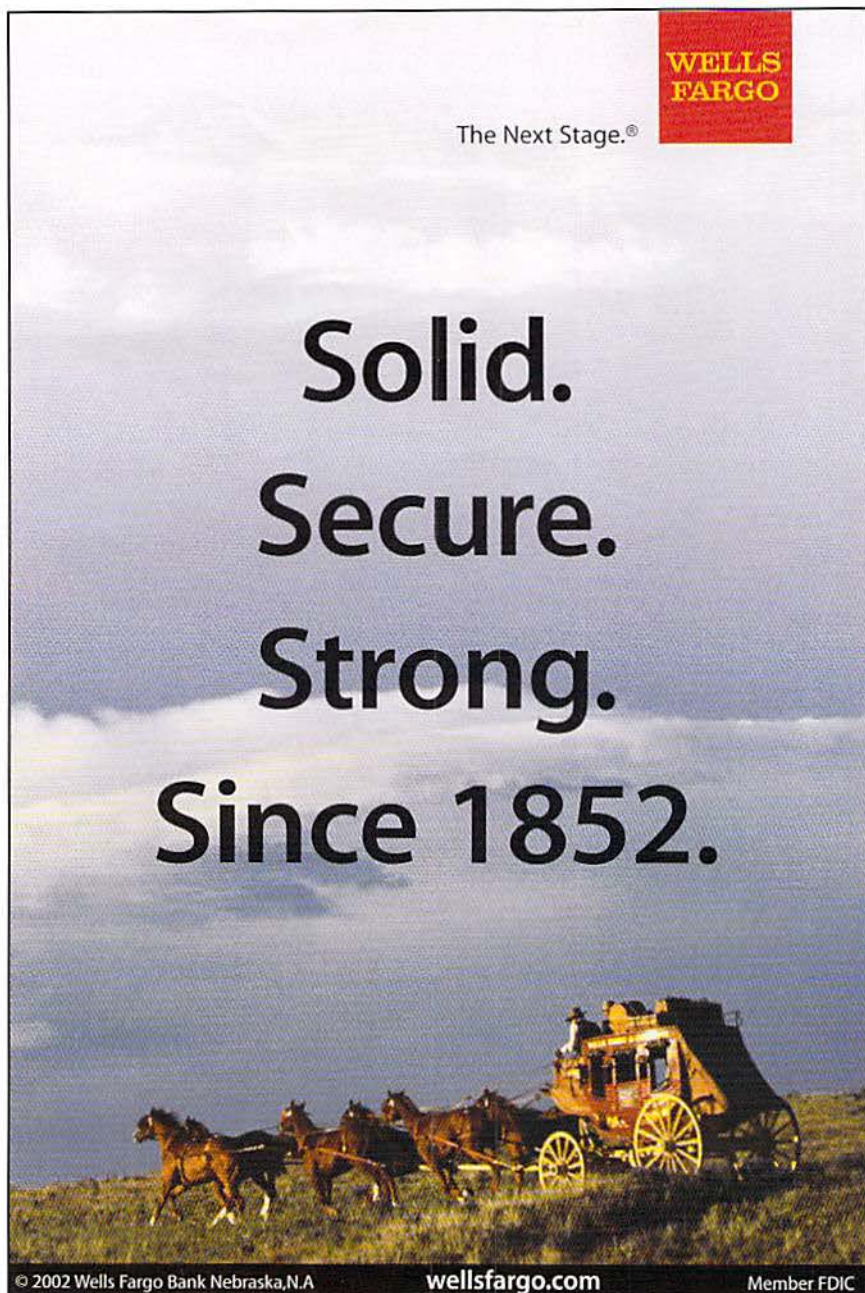
Many of the other seniors will be dealing with similar emotions in the remaining weeks. Being from Nebraska, however, might make it more difficult. "For a lot of guys that aren't from Nebraska this is kind of just a stepping stone to wherever they're going," says Johnson. "I know a lot of people pour their hearts into this. But for me, I've been a Husker ever since I was a little kid."

And, he adds, "I'll be a Husker for the rest of my life." ■

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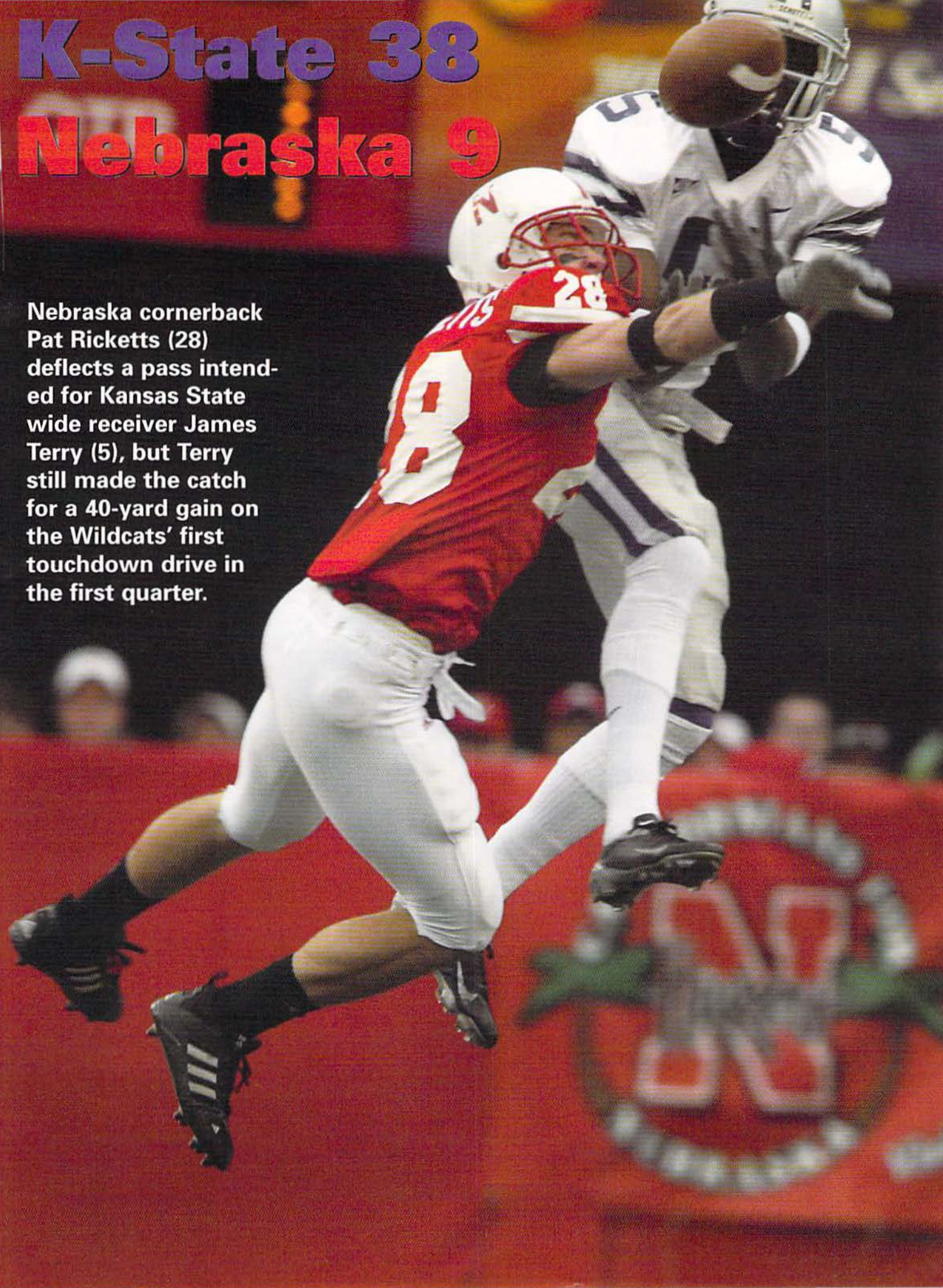
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K-State 38

Nebraska 9

Nebraska cornerback Pat Ricketts (28) deflects a pass intended for Kansas State wide receiver James Terry (5), but Terry still made the catch for a 40-yard gain on the Wildcats' first touchdown drive in the first quarter.



Unhappy

KSU's finishing touch adds to hard edge series has taken on

BY MIKE BABCOCK

PHOTOS BY SCOTT BRUHN

Embarrassed? Not Frank Solich. "I'm never embarrassed by my football team when they play hard," he said following Nebraska's 38-9 loss to Kansas State.

And in his estimation, the Cornhuskers had played hard.

Effort wasn't enough without execution, however. Hence, Nebraska's first loss to Kansas State at Memorial Stadium since 1968 and its worst loss at home since 1958, 31-0 to Missouri.

That it became so lopsided was evidence of a hard edge the series is beginning to assume as a result of Wildcat Coach Bill Snyder's apparent interest in adding insult to injury. Last season at Manhattan, he left his starters in to the end of a 49-13 victory. And he did the same thing this time around.

Leading 31-9 with 2:30 remaining, after a fumble recovery at the Kansas State 49-yard line, Snyder sent quarterback Ell Roberson and tailback Darren Sproles back onto the field.

Sproles picked up 4 yards, then broke free around his right end for 41 yards, setting up a 6-yard touchdown run by fullback Ayo Saba, much to the delight of Kansas State fans, who remained in the southwest corner of the stadium while Nebraska fans made a slow but steady exodus.

GAME STORY

Afterward, Solich was asked if he had an opinion on Sproles and Roberson playing with the outcome no longer in doubt. "Yes, I do," he said, tersely. "But that's the way it is."

Beyond that, "you'll have to ask Bill Snyder," he said.

Cornhusker offensive coordinator Barney Cotton was similarly reserved. "That's up to him," Cotton said of Snyder. "I know how we'll do it, if and when the situation arises."

An angry Nebraska defensive coordinator Bo Pelini, however, went toward Snyder and had to be restrained as the opposing coaches met on the field following the game.

During his Tuesday teleconference, Solich said Nebraska "have a great deal of respect for what they (the Wildcats) are all about" and "I would presume they respect what our program is all about."

But recent evidence has been to the contrary.

Early in the week, Roberson made disparaging remarks about Nebraska quarterback Jammal Lord during an interview with the Lincoln Journal Star, describing him as a "crazy cat."

Roberson told the newspaper "I don't want to be compared with him in any way."

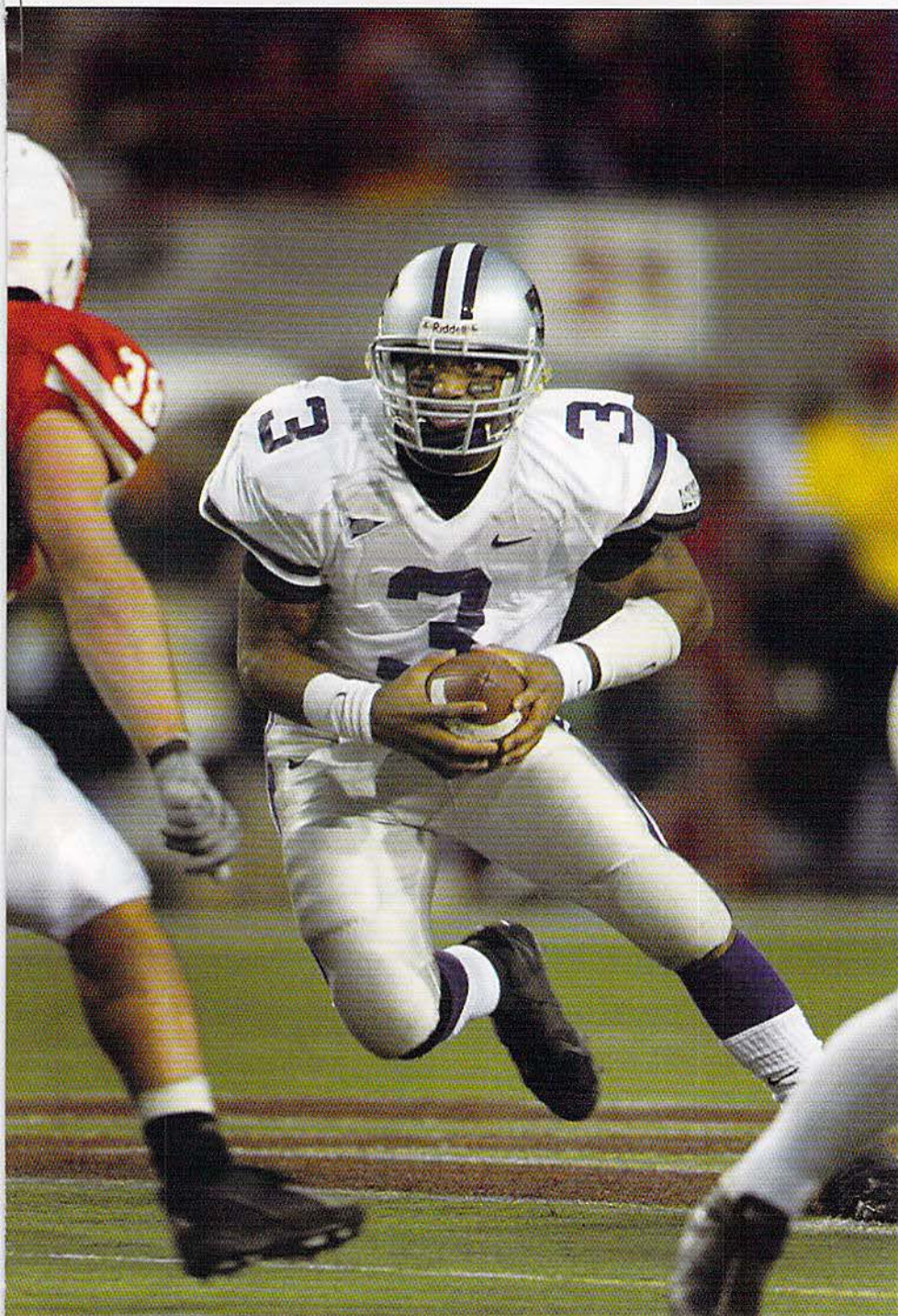
Lord refused to be drawn in. If he



had something to say, he would say it to Roberson's face.

When the team captains met at mid-field for the coin toss, ABC television cameras recorded Cornhusker

Ending



Kansas State quarterback Eli Roberson runs the option as Nebraska linebacker Barrett Ruud tries to contain him. Roberson ran for 90 yards and a touchdown and passed for 313 yards and two more scores.

division each year," Nebraska middle linebacker Barrett Ruud said on Tuesday.

"So it's definitely become a highlighted game."

Had the Cornhuskers won, they would have advanced to the Big 12 title game, with either a victory at Colorado on the day after Thanksgiving or a Kansas State victory against Missouri.

Now, the Kansas State-Missouri game will decide the North Division.

For a half against Kansas State, it appeared Nebraska had a shot at playing in Kansas City's Arrowhead Stadium on Dec. 6. But "the third quarter was disastrous," said Solich.

"And the fourth quarter didn't get any better."

The Cornhuskers were holding their own at the intermission, with the help of a pair of pass interceptions and a 6-yard touchdown pass from Lord to wide receiver Mark LeFlore.

Lord was in the grasp of Wildcat defensive end Thomas Houchin and it appeared that at least one knee had touched the ground when he released the ball to a wide-open LeFlore.

Not all of the breaks went Nebraska's way, however. During Kansas State's 15-play, 70-yard drive to Joe Rheem's 27-yard field goal, the Cornhuskers appeared to recover a Jermaine Moreira fumble. However, the officials ruled Moreira was down before the ball came loose.

"One play doesn't make a ball game, but one play can make a difference in whether we get points on the board versus them getting points on the board," Solich said.

"If you look at the tape, you will

weakside linebacker Demorrio Williams jawing with Roberson.

The mutual respect Solich talked about wasn't across the board.

Respect or not, the Kansas State

series is becoming a rivalry. Since the Big 12 was formed, with North and South Divisions, "it's kind of become one of those mainstay games where you know it's going to decide your

Sophomore I-back Cory Ross (22) found some openings in the first half (top right), rushing for 65 of his 87 yards. The going wasn't always so smooth for Ross (bottom right), who was making his first start. Ross also caught a screen pass for 26 yards in the first half.

draw your own conclusion."

Regardless of the conclusion to be drawn, Rheem's field goal made the score 17-7.

"There was not one particular play or one particular drive," Solich said of Nebraska's undoing in the second half. "It was a combination of things on both sides of the ball, and also on special teams."

After falling behind, Nebraska had to change an offensive approach that produced 216 yards during the first half, including 65 rushing by Cory Ross, starting for the first time at I-back.

Ross carried only four times in the second half, however, finishing with 87 yards.

"When you're battling to get back in it, your play-calling is different," said Solich.

The Cornhuskers went down the field with passes, and "when we have guys running free, we need to get them the ball," Cotton said. "We had our chances, we just didn't execute."

Lord was 2-of-12 passing with two interceptions in the second half.

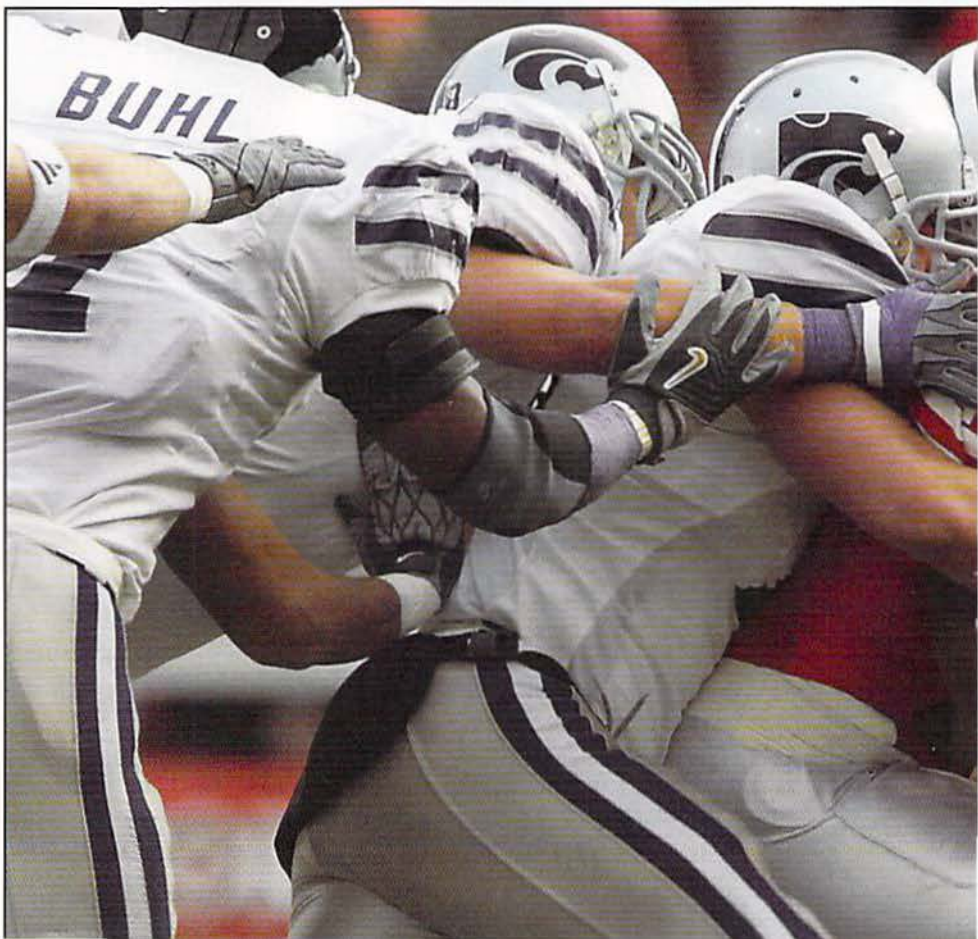
The defense was on the field for nearly 20 minutes of the second half and wore down under a Kansas State assault that amassed 561 total yards — the eighth-most in Nebraska history.

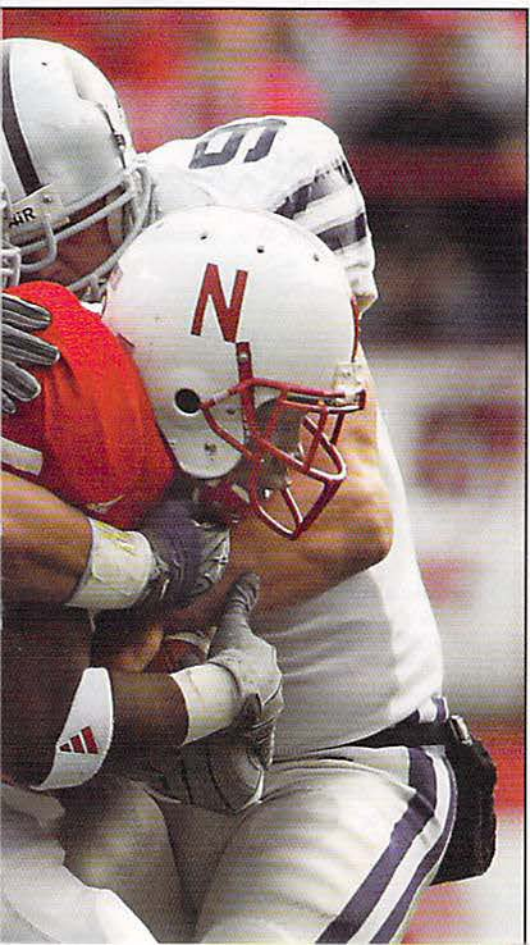
The Cornhuskers' frustration was such that when Kansas State punter Jared Brite took an intentional safety with 3:53 remaining in the game, he had to do it twice because they were offsidess the first time.

The intentional safety was part of the insult to injury.

The greater disrespect was Snyder's leaving Roberson and Sproles in the game, however. "I told him I didn't like it," Pelini told the Associated Press of his confrontation with the Wildcats' coach.

"I let him know that's not the way I've gone about things in the organizations I've been in." ■





GAME NOTES

Notes And Quotes From The Kansas State Game

ELL OF A QUARTERBACK

Kansas State quarterback Ell Roberson completed 15-of-28 passes for 313 yards and two touchdowns and rushed for 90 yards and one touchdown on 22 carries.

"I'd say he's one of the best we've played," said Nebraska free safety Josh Bullocks. "We saw Vince Young (of Texas), and he's up there."

The Cornhuskers intercepted Roberson three times, including one by Bullocks, increasing his school single-season record to 10. The interception and 41-yard return preceded Nebraska's touchdown. Bullocks almost picked off a second pass at the goal line, with an open field in front of him.

Defensive end Benard Thomas "knocked the ball out," Bullocks said. "It was one of those things that I had that got knocked away from me. I still should have held onto it."

Lornell McPherson and Pat Ricketts also intercepted passes for Nebraska.

The Cornhuskers have intercepted at least one pass in every game this season, and they have intercepted at least two passes in eight consecutive games. Their 27 interceptions for the season are tied for second-most in school history, with the 1971 team. The 1970 team intercepted 30.

Nebraska went into the game ranked first nationally in pass efficiency defense.

GUY SEMIFINALIST

Cornhusker senior Kyle Larson is among 10 semifinalists for the Ray Guy Award, presented annually to the nation's top collegiate punters. He averaged 49.1 yards on seven punts against Kansas State, with a long of 66 yards. The Ray Guy Award winner will be announced on Dec. 11.

Larson is averaging 45.7 yards on 56 punts this season. If he maintains that average, he will break the school record of 44.98 yards per punt, set by Dan Hadenfeldt in 1999.

IT CAME TO PASS

Jammal Lord attempted a career-high 26 passes, completing eight for 98 yards and one touchdown with two interceptions. His previous high was 25 passes against Kansas State last season.

"I thought Jammal played very hard," said Coach Frank Solich. "He did some really good things in the first half to make it a tie ball game at halftime. There were some long throws that were just a little off the mark that if completed would have helped a great deal and (gotten) some momentum going."

"We just didn't get anything going momentum wise to be able to carry through in the second half."

Nebraska picked up only three first downs in the second half.

DOUBLE HUNDRED

Middle linebacker Barrett Ruud and weakside linebacker Demorrio Williams each was credited, unofficially, with 14 tackles, bringing Ruud's season total to 123 and Williams' to 111. The last time two Cornhuskers had 100 tackles in a season was 1981 - Steve Damkroger and Brent Evans.

Ruud increased his career total to 263, moving from ninth to sixth on the all-time list. He passed Jim Wightman (254, 1975-77), Mark Munford (256, 1983-86) and Ed Stewart (257, 1991-94).

Williams, in just two seasons, has 203 tackles to rank in a tie for 24th place. He was credited with nine unassisted tackles, unofficially tying Jerry Murtaugh for the school single-season record of 71.

Williams was named the ABC/Chevrolet "Nebraska Player of the Game."

SENIOR DAY

The disappointment of the loss was compounded by the fact that 34 Nebraska seniors were making their final appearance at Memorial Stadium. "I'm down about that," said offensive tackle Dan Vili Waldrop, who picked up Solich before running on the field when he was announced.

"It just came out like that," Vili Waldrop said.

The loss was "just discouraging (in) our last home game as seniors," said Lord. "That's not how any team wants to be remembered, losing on your home field."

BLACKSHIRT AT LAST

Senior free safety Jerrell Pippens was Nebraska's special teams captain for the second time this season. When defensive coordinator Bo Pelini returned black practice jerseys to the first-team defense on the Monday before the game, Pippens also got one, for the first time in his career.

"I felt really elated," Pippens said. "There have been a lot of hard work and sacrifices through the years. I've been paying dues since 1999, coming behind a lot of great Husker players."

"I got it. I was real, real sweet." ■

2003 SCHEDULE

1	Aug. 30	Oklahoma St. (8-3), W 17-7	1-0
2	Sept. 6	Utah State (3-8), W 31-7	2-0
3	Sept. 13	Penn State (3-8), W 18-10	3-0
4	Sept. 25	@ Southern Miss (7-3), W 38-14	4-0
5	Oct. 4	Troy State (5-6), W 30-0	5-0
6	Oct. 11	@ Missouri (7-3), L 41-24	5-1
7	Oct. 18	Texas A&M (4-7), W 48-12	6-1
8	Oct. 25	Iowa State (2-8), W 28-0	7-1
9	Nov. 1	@ Texas (9-2), L 31-7	7-2
10	Nov. 8	@ Kansas (5-6), W 24-3	8-2
11	Nov. 15	Kansas State (9-3), L 38-9	8-3
12	Nov. 28	@ Colorado (5-6), 11 a.m., ABC	
	Dec. 7	Big 12 Championship at Kansas City, Mo., 7 p.m.	

BIG 12 CONFERENCE AT A GLANCE

	North		All	
	Conf.			
Kansas State	5	2	9	3
Nebraska	4	3	8	3
Missouri	3	3	7	3
Colorado	3	4	5	6
Kansas	2	5	5	6
Iowa State	0	6	2	8
	South		All	
	Conf.			
Oklahoma	7	0	11	0
Texas	6	1	9	2
Oklahoma State	4	3	8	3
Texas Tech	4	3	7	4
Texas A&M	2	5	4	7
Baylor	1	6	3	8

Saturday, Nov. 15
 Kansas State 38, Nebraska 9
 Oklahoma 41, Baylor 3
 Colorado 44, Iowa State 10
 Oklahoma State 44, Kansas 21
 Missouri 45, Texas A&M 22
 Texas 43, Texas Tech 40

Saturday, Nov. 22
 Oklahoma State at Baylor
 Iowa State at Kansas
 Missouri at Kansas State
 Oklahoma at Texas Tech

Friday, Nov. 28

Nebraska at Colorado
 Texas at Texas A&M

Saturday, Nov. 29

Iowa State at Missouri

Saturday, Dec. 6

Big 12 Championship, Kansas City,
 Arrowhead Stadium

UPCOMING OPPONENT'S SCHEDULE

Colorado (5-6)
 Aug. 30 vs. Colorado State, W 42-35
 Sept. 6 UCLA, W 16-14
 Sept. 13 Washington State, L 47-26
 Sept. 20 @ Florida State, L 47-7
 Oct. 4 @ Baylor, L 42-30
 Oct. 11 Kansas, W 50-47 (ot)
 Oct. 18 @ Kansas State, L 49-20
 Oct. 25 Oklahoma, L 34-20
 Nov. 1 @ Texas Tech, L 26-21
 Nov. 8 Missouri, W 21-16
 Nov. 15 @ Iowa State, W 44-10
 Nov. 28 Nebraska

GAME 12

At Colorado

Nov. 28

Location: Boulder, Colo.

Enrollment: 27,954

2003 record: 5-6

Coach: Gary Barnett, 4th year

Series: Nebraska leads 43-16-2

Time: 11 a.m., CST, ABC

Folsom Field, Boulder, Colo.



Buff to Watch

Colorado sophomore quarterback **Joel Klatt** has passed for 2,345 yards and 18 touchdowns. Klatt, a walk-on who played in three games as a true freshman last season, missed two starts with a sprained shoulder, but returned with a vengeance in throwing for 419 yards in the win over Kansas.



He played three seasons of minor league baseball, and was in spring training in 2001 and 2002 with the San Diego Padres.

Quick Facts

The Buffaloes lost six out of seven games, before coming together to defeat Missouri and Iowa State their last two games.

Much has been made of CU's tough schedule in 2003, and according to the NCAA formula through games of Nov. 8, it ranks as the fifth toughest in the nation. CU's opponents were 74-39 combined (.655).

The receiving duo of seniors **Derek McCoy** and **D.J. Hackett** continues to post impressive numbers. They are just the third tandem to combine for more than 100 catches in the same season at Colorado and have a shot to overtake the leaders.

Hackett has 69 catches for 919 yards and five touchdowns, while McCoy has caught 60 passes for 832 yards and 10 TDs. Michael Westbrook and Charles Johnson combined for 133 catches in 1992 to rank No. 1 as a duo.

Sophomore tailback **Brian Calhoun** leads the Buffs in rushing with 182 carries for 761 yards and five touchdowns. He also has 26 receptions for 224 yards.

Senior free safety **Medford Moor** leads the Colorado defense with 103 tackles, including four for losses and one sack. He has two interceptions.

TENTATIVE 2-DEEPS

NEBRASKA OFFENSE

WR X	2	Ross Pilkington*	6-0	190	So.
	24	Jack O'Holleran	5-10	205	Jr.
LT	51	Richie Incognito*	6-3	300	So.
	69	Nick Piovato*	6-3	300	Jr.
LG	78	Mike Erickson**	6-4	305	Jr.
	75	Brandon Koch	6-3	310	So.
C	79	Josh Sewell*	6-2	300	Sr.
	84	Kurt Mann	6-3	290	RFr.
RG	71	Jake Anderson*	6-1	300	Jr.
	75	Brandon Koch	6-3	310	So.
RT	68	Dan Vili Waldrop***	6-5	350	Sr.
	68	Darren DeLone	6-5	320	Jr.
TE Y	11	Matt Herian*	6-5	240	So.
	82	Phil Peetz**	6-2	270	Sr.
QB	5	Jammal Lord***	6-2	220	Sr.
	12	Joe Dalley	6-0	200	Fr.
FB	4	Judd Davies***	6-0	250	Sr.
	45	Steve Kriewald**	5-10	250	Jr.
IB	22	Cory Ross*	5-6	200	So.
	1	Josh Davis**	5-11	205	Sr.
WR Z	28	Isalah Fluellen	6-0	180	RFr.
or	10	Mark LaFlore*	5-11	185	So.
PK	27	David Dyches	6-1	190	Fr.

NEBRASKA DEFENSE

LDE	5	Benard Thomas**	6-4	265	Jr.
	96	Titus Adams*	6-3	290	So.
NT	59	Ryon Bingham**	6-3	290	Sr.
	94	Patrick Kabongo***	6-6	320	Sr.
DT	66	Le Kevin Smith*	6-2	305	So.
	74	Brandon Teamer	6-5	270	Fr.
RDE	88	Trevor Johnson***	6-4	255	Sr.
	90	Adam Carriker	6-6	260	RFr.
BLB	2	T.J. Hollowell**	6-0	230	Sr.
	11	Ira Cooper**	6-2	230	Jr.
MLB	38	Barrett Ruud*	6-2	240	Jr.
	54	Chad Sievers*	6-3	230	Jr.
WLB	7	Demorris Williams	6-1	210	Sr.
	39	Chad Buller*	5-11	215	Sr.
LCB	3	Fabian Washington*	5-11	175	So.
	4	Terrell Butler*	5-10	190	Sr.
FS	20	Josh Bullocks*	6-1	195	So.
	31	Jerrell Pippens***	6-2	195	Sr.
SS	14	Daniel Bullocks*	6-1	200	So.
	23	Shane Siegel*	6-2	210	So.
RCB	28	Pat Ricketts***	5-11	180	Sr.
or	1	Lornell McPherson**	5-9	175	Jr.
P	19	Kyle Larson**	6-0	205	Sr.

COLORADO OFFENSE

WR	80	Derek McCoy***	6-3	205	Sr.
	15	Jeremy Bloom*	5-9	175	So.
ST	74	Sam Wilder**	6-5	275	Jr.
	73	Clint O'Neal*	6-6	280	So.
SG	66	Brian Daniels	6-5	300	Fr.
	69	Karl Allis***	6-5	310	Sr.
C	62	Marwan Hage***	6-3	290	Sr.
	58	Mark Fenton	6-4	295	RFr.
TG	52	Derek Stemrich*	6-6	285	Jr.
	79	Gary Moore*	6-7	330	So.
TT	69	Karl Allis***	6-5	310	Sr.
	73	Clint O'Neal*	6-6	280	So.
TE	89	Joe Klopfenstein*	6-5	240	So.
	86	Jesse Wallace*	6-3	240	Jr.
QB	14	Joel Klatt*	6-1	195	So.
	13	Erik Greenberg	6-2	200	So.
TB	2	Brian Calhoun*	5-10	190	So.
	8	Daniel Jolly	6-0	230	Fr.
FB	34	Lawrence Vickers*	6-2	225	So.
	44	Chad Gardner***	6-2	235	Sr.
WR	88	D.J. Hackett*	6-3	200	Sr.
	85	John Donahoe*	6-0	185	Jr.
PK	16	Mason Crosby	6-2	200	Fr.

COLORADO DEFENSE

DE	97	Gabe Nyenhuis*	6-4	275	Sr.
	51	Alex Ligon	6-4	240	RFr.
DT	98	Brandon Dabdoub**	6-1	290	Jr.
	94	DeAndre Fluellen***	6-1	300	Sr.
DT	60	Matt McChesney**	6-4	290	Jr.
	93	Vaka Manupuna*	6-1	290	So.
DE	82	James Garee*	6-5	255	So.
	50	Chris Hollis*	6-1	235	So.
MLB	54	Sean Tufts***	6-4	245	Sr.
	49	Thaddeus Washington	6-0	240	RFr.
WLB	33	Walter Boye-Doe	6-2	230	Fr.
	12	Akarika Dawn*	6-2	225	So.
SS	20	Clyde Surrrell**	5-10	190	Sr.
	27	Brian Ihwuh*	6-1	215	So.
WS	5	J.J. Billingsley*	5-11	190	So.
	20	Clyde Surrrell***	5-10	190	Sr.
FS	17	Medford Mooror**	6-2	200	Sr.
	18	Dominique Brooks	6-2	205	Fr.
CB	1	Sammy Joseph	6-1	180	RFr.
	7	Vance Washington*	5-9	180	So.
CB	6	Phil Jackson***	6-1	190	Sr.
	26	Terrence Wheatley	6-0	170	Fr.
P	29	John Torp	6-2	200	So.

THE PAUL FELL PREDICTION

NEBRASKA vs. COLORADO



NOVEMBER 29, 2003

IF BUFFS BELIEVE HUSKERS HAVE ONE FOOT IN GRAVE, THEY'RE IN FOR A NASTY, POST-TURKEY DAY SURPRISE!

Picks

Brian Hill
Editor

The Huskers will need to put it all together, something they haven't done. Colorado has played Nebraska well in recent years, and who knows what the Huskers' frame of mind will be? Nebraska hasn't forgotten about its last visit to Boulder, which coincided with the start of a lot of its problems. A victory won't make everything all right, but it would certainly help. **Nebraska 22, Colorado 20**

Mike Babcock
Contributing Editor

Nebraska's road woes are likely to continue against a Colorado team that has begun to play well. A Cornhusker victory would go a long way toward breaking the spell cast by what happened at Boulder the last time Nebraska visited. But coming back from the Kansas State loss will be difficult. **Colorado 21, Nebraska 20**

NEBRASKA At COLORADO

Terry Douglass
Grand Island Independent
Sports Editor

What better place for Nebraska to finally kick its road woes than where the problem all began? Colorado's 62-36 "Black Friday" win in 2001 won't soon be forgotten by Husker fans, but watching their team end their two-game losing streak against the Buffs might help. No matter what, it won't be easy. **Nebraska 20, Colorado 17**

Mark Collins
Buffalo Sports News Editor

Gary Barnett's teams have been marked by their inconsistency from year to year, except when they play Nebraska. Whether dwelling in the Big 12 basement, as in 1999, or heading for the title game in 2002, the Buffs are up for the Cornhuskers. It's no different this year. **Colorado 31, Nebraska 27**

GAME STATS

NEBRASKA Vs. KANSAS STATE

Nov. 15, 2003 • Memorial Stadium • Lincoln, Neb.

SCORE BY QUARTERS

Kansas State	7	0	10	21	—	38
Nebraska	0	7	0	2	—	9

TEAM STATS

	KSU	NU
First Downs	26	16
Rushing	14	9
Passing	12	7
Penalty	0	0
Rushing Attempts	53	41
Yards Gained Rushing	261	215
Yards Lost Rushing	13	20
Net Yards Rushing	248	195
Net Yards Passing	313	98
Passes Attempted	28	26
Passes Completed	15	8
Had Intercepted	3	2
Total Plays	81	67
Total Net Yards	561	293
Avg. Gain Per Play	6.9	4.4
Fumbles-Lost	0-0	2-2
Penalties-Yards	7-43	1-5
Punts-Yards	3-147	7-344
Avg. Per Punt	49.0	49.1
Punt Returns-Yards	2-35	1-8
Interceptions-Yards	2-10	3-52
Fumble Returns-Yards	0-0	0-0
Kickoff Returns-Yards	0-0	6-120
Possession Time	33:22	26:38



Coach Frank Solich greets Kyle Larson, one of 34 seniors honored during pregame ceremonies.

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

NEBRASKA

Name	Att.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Lord, J.	21	88	4.2	28	0
Ross, C.	16	87	5.4	16	0
Fluellen, I.	1	13	13.0	13	0
Davis, J.	1	10	10.0	10	0
Kriewald, S.	1	3	3.0	3	0
Dailey, J.	1	-6	-6.0	0	0

Name	C-A-I	Pct.	Yds.	TD
Lord, J.	8-26-2	30.8	98	1

Name	No.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Fluellen, I.	2	25	12.5	14	0
Herian, M.	2	21	10.5	11	0
Pilkington, R.	2	20	10.0	11	0
Ross, C.	1	26	26.0	26	0
LeFlore, M.	1	6	6.0	6	1

Name	No.	Yds.	Avg.	LNG	I20
Larson, K.	7	344	49.1	66	2

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Davis, J.	1	8	8.0	8	0

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Davis, J.	6	120	20.0	29	0

Name	Att.	Good	Long
Dyches, D.	1	0	30

Name	UT	AT	TT	FL	Int.	Sacks
Williams, D.	9	5	14	2-2	0	0
Ruud, B.	6	8	14	0	0	0
Bingham, R.	3	6	9	0	0	0
Bullocks, D.	4	2	6	0	0	0
Thomas, B.	3	3	6	0	0	0
Pippens, J.	1	4	5	0	0	0
Kabongo, P.	1	4	5	0	0	0
Smith, L.	0	4	4	0	0	0
Johnson, T.	1	2	3	0	0	0
Hollowell, T.	0	3	3	0	0	0
Teamer, B.	2	0	2	0	0	0
Keiser, D.	2	0	2	0	0	0
Ricketts, P.	1	1	2	0	1-0	0
Bullocks, J.	0	2	2	0	1-41	0
Cooper, I.	1	0	1	0	0	0

McPherson, L.	1	0	1	0	1-11	0
Huston, K.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Fluellen, I.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Washington, F.	1	0	1	0	0	0
White, S.	0	1	1	0	0	0
Buller, C.	0	1	1	0	0	0

KANSAS STATE

Name	Att.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Sproles, D.	25	140	5.6	41	1
Roberson, E.	22	90	4.1	11	1
Wilson, T.	2	14	7.0	10	0
Saba, A.	2	10	5.0	6	1
Moriera, J.	1	5	5.0	5	0
Team	1	-11	-11.0	0	0

Name	C-A-I	Pct.	Yds.	TD
Roberson, E.	15-28-3	53.6	313	2

Name	No.	Yds.	YPC	LNG	TD
Terry, J.	6	175	29.2	63	2
Polite, A.	5	54	10.8	19	0
Casey, B.	2	67	33.5	37	0
Dennis, D.	2	17	8.5	9	0

Name	No.	Yds.	Avg.	LNG	I20
Brite, J.	3	147	49.0	63	2

Name	Att.	Good	Long
Rheem, J.	2	1	27

Name	UT	AT	TT	FL	Int.	Sacks
Washington, R.	6	4	10	0	0	0
Jordan, R.	6	1	7	0	0	0
Houchin, T.	2	5	7	1-5	0	1-5
Montgomery, J.	0	7	7	0	0	0
Sims, T.	3	3	6	0	0	0
Buhl, J.	3	3	6	1-5	0	0
Hickman, B.	2	4	6	1-4	0	1-4
Williams, C.	2	3	5	0	1-0	0
McGill, J.	1	3	4	0	1-10	0
Berry, J.	1	3	4	0	0	0
Shull, A.	1	2	3	0	0	0
Tetuan, J.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Lavender, L.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Mann, V.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Thurmond, M.	1	0	1	1-6	0	1-6
Dennis, D.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Terry, J.	1	0	1	0	0	0
Clark, B.	0	1	1	0	0	0
Archer, B.	0	1	1	0	0	0

SCORING

KSU — Darren Sproles 22-yard run (Joe Rheem kick)
NU — Mark LeFlore 6-yard pass from Jammal Lord (David Dyches kick)
KSU — Eli Roberson 11-yard run (Rheem kick)
KSU — Rheem 27-yard field goal
KSU — James Terry 63-yard pass from Roberson (Rheem kick)
KSU — Terry 37-yard pass from Roberson (Rheem kick)
NU — Team safety
KSU — Ayo Saba 6-yard run (Rheem kick)
Att. — 78,014
Weather — cloudy
Temp. — 50

2003 SEASON STATS

RUSHING LEADERS

Name	G	Att.	Yds.	YPG	TD
Lord, J.	11	184	791	71.9	9
Davis, J.	11	134	580	52.7	2
Horne, D.	11	106	446	40.5	4
Ross, C.	11	71	334	30.4	1
Dailey, J.	8	33	122	15.3	0
Fluellen, I.	9	11	113	12.5	1
Kriewald, S.	11	15	82	7.5	1
Davis, J.	11	25	67	6.1	4
Miller, R.	6	10	65	10.8	1
LeFlore, M.	11	2	21	1.9	0

PASSING

Name	G	C-A-I	Pct.	Yds.	TD
Lord, J.	11	69-141-8	48.9	999	5
Dailey, J.	8	9-14-2	64.3	117	2

RECEIVING

Name	G	No.	Yds.	YPC	YPG	TD
Herian, M.	11	20	420	21.0	38.2	2
Pilkington, R.	11	17	240	14.1	21.8	1
LeFlore, M.	11	17	168	9.9	15.3	2
Fluellen, I.	9	10	187	18.7	20.8	2
Davis, J.	11	4	21	5.2	1.9	0
Davis, J.	11	4	19	4.8	1.7	0
Ross, C.	11	2	36	18.0	3.3	0
Keiser, D.	11	1	9	9.0	0.8	0
Kriewald, S.	11	1	6	6.0	0.5	0
Horne, D.	11	1	5	5.0	0.5	0
Liley, T.	11	1	5	5.0	0.5	0

FIELD GOALS

Name	G	Att.	Good	Long
Dyches, D.	10	18	12	41
DeAngelis, S.	6	3	1	28

PUNTING

Name	No.	Yds.	Avg.	LNG	I20
Larson, K.	56	2,559	45.7	80	19

PUNT RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Davis, J.	26	228	8.8	30	0
Ross, C.	6	62	10.3	30	0

KICKOFF RETURNS

Name	No.	Yds.	YPR	LNG	TD
Davis, J.	22	532	24.2	43	0
O'Holleran, J.	2	27	13.5	21	0

DEFENSIVE LEADERS

Name	G	UT	AT	TT	FL	Int.	S/Yds.
Ruud, B.	11	59	64	123	11-37	1-27	2.5-21
Williams, D.	11	71	40	111	16-64	1-2	8-55
Hollowell, T.	11	30	35	65	7-29	1-10	1.5-13
Bullocks, D.	11	37	24	61	4-5	1-11	0
Johnson, T.	11	29	28	57	7-23	0	2-15
Washington, F.	11	33	18	51	3-6	3-14	0
Bingham, R.	9	19	25	44	7-10	0	1-2
Pippens, J.	11	23	20	43	3-9	2-2	1
7Bullocks, J.	11	17	25	42	0	10-154	0
Smith, L.	11	15	24	39	5-12	0	0

TEAM STATISTICS	NU	OPP
Total Offensive Yards	3,727	3,356
Plays	760	738
Average Per Play	4.9	4.5
Average Per Game	338.8	305.1
Net Rushing Yards	2,611	1,469
Attempts	603	391
TDs Rushing	23	13
Net Passing Yards	1,116	1,887
Completions	78	171
Average Per Pass	7.1	5.4
Average Per Catch	14.3	11.0
Average Per Game	101.5	171.6
TDs Passing	7	7
Sacks By-Yards	20-155	17-127
Fumbles-Lost	28-14	25-15
Penalties-Yards	76-596	70-556
Scoring	1st 2nd 3rd 4th OT TOT	
NU	83 46 95 50 0	274
Opponents	38 34 16 75 0	163

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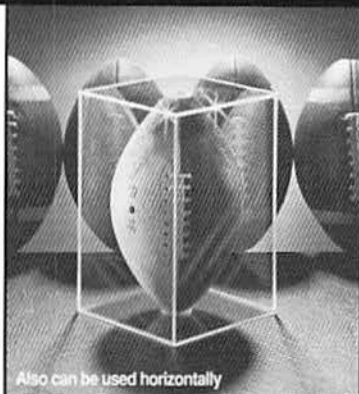
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WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Trick of the Trade

Center Saalfeld found a way to be quicker off the ball

By Mike Babcock

It was one of the tricks of the trade, anticipating the snap count. Kelly Saalfeld did it to compensate for what he claims was his lack of quickness. "I was so slow," he says.

Saalfeld was Nebraska's starting center in 1978 and 1979, and regularly snapped the ball a fraction of a second before the quarterback voiced the "hut" that signaled a play was to begin.

When the quarterback "started to draw his breath, I started the snap," Saalfeld says. That gave him an additional edge, however slight, on the defender he was assigned to block.

He was able to anticipate the snap because Coach Tom Osborne's system used a rhythmic cadence. The Cornhuskers never used a hard count, according to Saalfeld.

The NFL's New York Giants did, however, and Saalfeld found out anticipating a hard count could lead to problems. One day during a Giants' practice, he anticipated the count from quarterback Phil Simms. The ball ended up on the ground because Simms wasn't ready for it.

Simms scooped up the ball and fired a pass at Saalfeld's posterior.

Saalfeld describes it now as a "Preparation H" pass.

Anticipating the snap count was effective at Nebraska, however, and Saalfeld would pass along the technique to his successor, Dave Rimington, whose ability to get off the ball quickly was among many qualities that enabled him to earn two Outland Trophies, the only player ever to do so.

Rimington was a key figure in Cornhusker offensive linemen achieving a celebrity status that linemen in most other programs envy



Kelly Saalfeld (57) was Nebraska's starting center in 1978 and 1979 and earned All-Big Eight honors in 1979.

still. Rimington was among the first to roll up his sleeves, says Saalfeld, a bit of flash that would have seemed extreme for the linemen with whom he played.

Rolling up sleeves and tucking them under the shoulder pads also eliminated something a defender could grab onto, as did a short-lived practice of spraying WD-40 lubricant on jerseys.

That practice post-dated Saalfeld, too. Now it would be illegal, as would using stick-em for a better grip on the ball. Saalfeld always kept stick-em on a shoe so it was readily available.

Even though he hasn't played the

game for 20-plus years, Saalfeld knows what's legal and what isn't because he's been officiating since 1991, when a friend and high school basketball coach convinced him to work a junior varsity football game with him in Omaha.

Because he had invested \$120 or so in officials' gear, Saalfeld figured he might as well get his money's worth. Since then, he has worked high school games in Omaha, small college games and indoor football games. This season, he will move up to the NFL-monitored Arena League.

He also has come to Lincoln to officiate Nebraska practices, and his goal

is to become an NCAA Division I-A official. To that end, he has kept the foul charts at Big 12 games at Memorial Stadium. Even though the foul charter is "more of a clerical person," he wears his gear and could step in if a substitute official were needed. "I'd be fine," he says. "I could work in a pinch."

Because he played at Nebraska, however, "I don't think they'd put me in," he says.

Officiating is a little like being an offensive lineman, according to Saalfeld. Usually, officials aren't noticed unless they make mistakes. "If you do a good job, no one notices," he says.

"It translates to my previous life at Nebraska."

That life began as a 215-pound walk-on from Columbus, Neb., Lakeview High School. The odds were against him. But he wasn't "bright enough to understand," he says.

What he understood was, he had grown up listening to Lyell Bremser broadcast Cornhusker games on the radio. And he had a plan, a series of goals, the first of which was to make the team.

Once he got to Nebraska, he quickly understood the task he faced.

When he went to Walt Johnson, the freshman equipment manager, and asked what having a locker in the north field house meant, Johnson replied, "Get a clue and quit." But he didn't.

As he achieved each goal, he went to another, get on the field, earn a scholarship, start.

He would have gotten a scholarship one semester earlier than he did had he not moved from offensive tackle to center. Walk-ons who climbed to second team were given scholarships. And Saalfeld would have been a second-team tackle after redshirting his second season.

But Nebraska needed depth at center behind All-American Tom Davis, following the transfer of Keith Bishop. So instead of getting a scholarship before the fall of his sophomore year, Saalfeld had to wait until that spring. When Davis finished, he stepped in, earning first-team All-Big Eight in 1979.

He was drafted by the Green Bay Packers, went to the Giants, suffered a knee injury in training camp, and was picked back up by the Packers, only to fail the physical. He also spent a week in training camp with the USFL's New Jersey Generals and would have signed if the money had

been right.

Saalfeld began working in the shipping business and now works for Overnite Transportation, the nation's largest non-union carrier. He, his wife and two daughters live in Omaha.

Even though his "separation" from football lasted nearly 10 years, "you feel like you should be out there," he says. And officiating has provided him with that opportunity.

As with his Cornhusker career, he has set goals. "It's a lot about goal-setting," he says. "I've learned that though athletics. I began setting goals to get to the next level."

Looking back, he probably should have done that during his brief NFL stint.

"Maybe I didn't set them at that point. Maybe I failed to do it," he says.

But he's doing it now, and the Arena League officiating is a significant step. He was among only six of 138 chosen, after working arenafootball2 games. He was also close to working NFL-Europe games.

The NFL would be the ultimate goal, of course, and a "good way to put my girls through college," he says. But for the immediate future, NCAA Division I-A, "that's my next goal." ■

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Top Safeties Eye Huskers

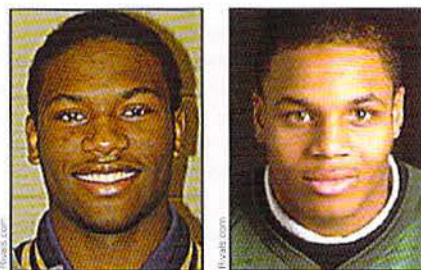
Prospects from Arkansas, New Jersey have Nebraska high on their lists

By Doug Horwich

Nebraska has had a strong history of outstanding safety play over the past decade, and a number of Husker safeties have gone on to have outstanding professional careers, including Toby Wright, Mike Minter, Mike Brown and Eric Warfield.

However, performance at both safety positions dropped off at Nebraska following Mike Brown's departure after the 1999 season and continued to be inconsistent for the subsequent three seasons.

This season has seen something of



Nebraska is recruiting safety prospects Stephen Green (left) of Little Rock, Ark., and Quran Barge of Camden, N.J.

a rebirth at the safety positions in Lincoln under new secondary coach Marvin Sanders. Free safety Josh Bullocks leads the nation with nine interceptions in 10 games, and twin brother Daniel has provided solid play at the strong safety position. Backup Jerrell Pippens has also been outstanding.

However, despite the talent at both safety positions, depth is lacking. While the Bullocks brothers are expected to be in Lincoln through the 2005 season, Pippens is a senior and backup strong safety Philip

Bland is a junior. Depth is needed for the future at both free safety and strong safety, and at least some of that depth must be secured in the 2004 recruiting class. The Husker staff is therefore pursuing a handful of top safety prospects around the country.

One of the top prospects is Stephen Green (5-foot-11, 180 pounds, 4.5-second 40-yard dash) from Pulaski Academy in Little Rock, Ark. Green has scholarship offers from Arkansas, Nebraska, Iowa, Boston College, Missouri, Colorado, Vanderbilt, Arkansas State and North Carolina. He already has identified a list of favorites, which could change if more offers come through.

"My top schools right now are Arkansas, Nebraska, Iowa, and Missouri," Green said. "I'm still waiting on offers from LSU, Ole Miss, and Tennessee, too."

Green has yet to schedule any visits, primarily because his team is one of the best in Arkansas, and figures to contend for a state championship

NEBRASKA COMMITMENTS FOR 2004

Player	Hometown (school)	Ht.	Wt.	Pos.
Lance Brandenburgh	Overland Park, Kan. (St. Thomas Aquinas)	6-1	215	LB
Andy Christensen	Bennington, Neb.	6-3	275	DT
Allan Evridge	Papillion, Neb. (Papillion-LaVista)	6-1	205	QB
Mike Huff	Ralston, Neb.	6-5	300	OL
Michael Keenan	Kansas City, Mo. (Oak Park)	6-2	220	LB
Maurice McClellan	Pawcatuck, Conn. (Stonington)	6-3	210	ATH
D.T. McDowell	Tucker, Ga.	6-1	190	QB
Terrence Nunn	Houston, Texas (Cypress Falls)	6-0	185	WR
Seth Olsen	Omaha, Neb. (Millard North)	6-5	300	OL
Clay Sievers	Elkhorn, Neb.	6-4	220	TE/LB
Ty Steinkuhler	Lincoln, Neb. (Southwest)	6-3	235	DE
Nathan Swift	Hutchinson, Minn.	6-3	190	WR

this year.

"I haven't scheduled any of my visits yet," he said. "Most people have told me to wait until after the playoffs because you never know how deep we're going to go. We hope to make it all the way to the state title game, which is in mid-December."

Although Green has excelled as a running back for Pulaski, he feels that his future at the next level is at the free safety position.

"I think safety is my best position," he said. "I'm good at defending the run, and I have very good recovery speed. I pride myself on being a good tackler, too."

Green watches a lot of college football on Saturdays and likes what he's seen from the Huskers thus far.

"I spend just about every Saturday watching college football on TV," he said. "I've seen most all of the schools I've mentioned at least once. Last week, I watched Missouri play, I've seen Nebraska, Arkansas and Ole Miss, and I've watched Iowa. I like the way some of the teams play, and I've enjoyed watching some of the games quite a bit."

Green is being recruited for Nebraska by assistant head coach Turner Gill, and the two have spent a great deal of time getting to know each other.

"I like Coach Gill from Nebraska and Coach Hunter from North Carolina," he said. "He's real down to earth. Every time I talk to him, we have a long conversation. He tries to find out more about me as a person. He's a really nice guy."

Green has watched the Huskers since childhood and has always admired Nebraska's program.

"I used to watch Nebraska when I was a kid," he said. "They played Florida State a lot, with Tommie Frazier and those guys. They have a real good program."

Green also excels on the track and intends to compete in both sports in college. He is also a serious student and will likely weigh academics as heavily as athletics.

"I want to go to a school that has a great academic and athletic program," Green said. "I also want to go somewhere that will allow me to play football and run track. I'll also look at the school's winning tradition and the percentage of players that they graduate."

"My relationship with the coaches

RECRUITING NOTES

NU Still Covets In-State Players

By Rick Shaw

Nebraska already has received oral commitments from six in-state athletes and hopes to lure an additional three to four home state blue-chippers to Lincoln for its recruiting class of 2004.

The in-state prospects who already have pledged to join the Huskers in 2004 include quarterback Allan Etridge of Papillion, linemen Mike Huff of Ralston, Andy Christensen of Bennington and Seth Olsen of Omaha (Millard North), tight end Clay Sievers of Elkhorn, and defensive end Ty Steinkuhler of Lincoln (Southwest).

— Zach Copple of Southeast High in Lincoln is yet another in-state lineman coveted by the Nebraska staff. The 6-foot-4, 275-pound offensive tackle/defensive tackle has offers from Colorado State, Oregon, and Wyoming, in addition to the Huskers.

"I have a definite top three, with those schools being Nebraska, Harvard, and Virginia," Copple said. "Virginia has not offered yet, but I recently sent them some tapes and hope to hear from them soon."

"I've been down to a couple of Nebraska games this season and have tried my hardest to resist the temptation to commit right away. I want to be open-minded and explore all of the opportunities that are available to me."

A Nebraska all-state defensive lineman as a junior, Copple's performance in the classroom promises to open up some additional college opportunities.

"Harvard does not offer athletic scholarships, so I'm going through the application process like anyone else who applies there," Copple said. "I'm in the top three out of 500 students at my school, so I believe my class standing along with a spot on the athletic roster will increase my chances of receiving some type of scholarship there."

— Running back Brandon Gunn and cornerback Cortney Grixby of Omaha Central are the only other in-state athletes currently holding scholarship offers from Nebraska. Both players were to take official visits to Lincoln during the weekend of Nov. 14.

— One player who may garner an offer before the process is complete is offensive guard prospect Adam Schroeder of Millard North. The 6-4, 285-pound blue-chipper plays next to Husker commit Olsen. The two have helped pave the way for Millard North (Class A's No. 1-ranked team) to average almost 400 yards of rushing offense this fall.

"I'm getting talked to from a lot of schools," Schroeder said. "Wyoming, Colorado State, Iowa State, Nebraska and Northwestern are all calling. Those schools really don't come out and say that I'm going to get an offer, but they all talk like they are very interested."

"Nebraska has always been my favorite team, but I'm pretty open minded right now. I'll take whatever the best offer is."

Schroeder posted some good test scores at Nebraska's camp last summer. In addition to a 345-pound bench press and a 27-inch vertical leap, the lineman turned in a swift time of 5.1 seconds (hand held) in the 40-yard dash.

— Other in-state prospects who are still looking for Nebraska offers include running back Danny Woodhead of North Platte, fullback Keith Lloyd and safety Jake Galusha of Omaha (Millard North) and defensive back Mike Brower of Fairmont (Fillmore Central). ■



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will be important, too. I want to play for a coach that's fun but serious about football."

The Husker staff is also looking at safety Quran Barge (6-0, 205, 4.5) from Camden Catholic High School in Camden, N.J. Barge has a list of favorites that includes Syracuse, Virginia, Nebraska, Iowa, Michigan and Michigan State. He has already scheduled a Dec. 12 visit to Lincoln.

Barge has been told by the Husker staff that he can have his choice of either running back or safety at Nebraska, but it's likely that they view Barge as more of a strong safety than an I-back.

"Nebraska is giving me a choice to play offense or defense," he said. "I like Coach (Jimmy) Williams, and Nebraska has a lot of city kids that play for them, so I think I'd have a lot of common with some of the guys there. I like how their defense plays. They play physical and fast and swarm to the ball. They have a good defense.

"Coach Williams is cool because he's from the city (Washington D.C.) and said that Nebraska is near a city (Omaha). I could relate to him."

Despite Barge's love for the running back position, he is definitely not averse to playing safety and realizes that his best shot at a professional career may be on defense.

"I look at it like I could get into the NFL easier as a strong safety or defensive back," he said. "That position traditionally doesn't run as deep in the NFL. There are a lot of great running backs. I'm probably leaning a bit more toward playing defense in college right now."

Barge has the combination of size and speed that college coaches covet.

"On defense, I'm big enough to play linebacker but fast enough to play safety," he said. "I can play on an island in pass coverage because I have the speed, and I'm strong enough to play the run."

Like Green, Barge has watched quite a bit of Husker football over the past few years, though they were not a favorite of his as a child, primarily because of the region in which he lives.

"When I was a kid, I mainly watched Michigan and Penn State," he said. "The last couple of years, though, I've started to watch Nebraska. Just recently, I began looking a bit closer at Iowa too. I'm pretty familiar with all of them now." ■

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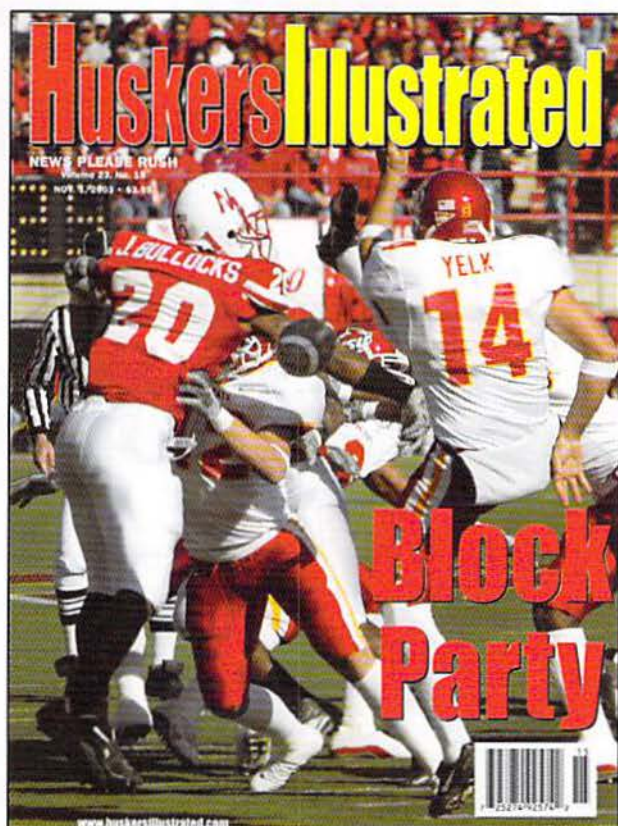
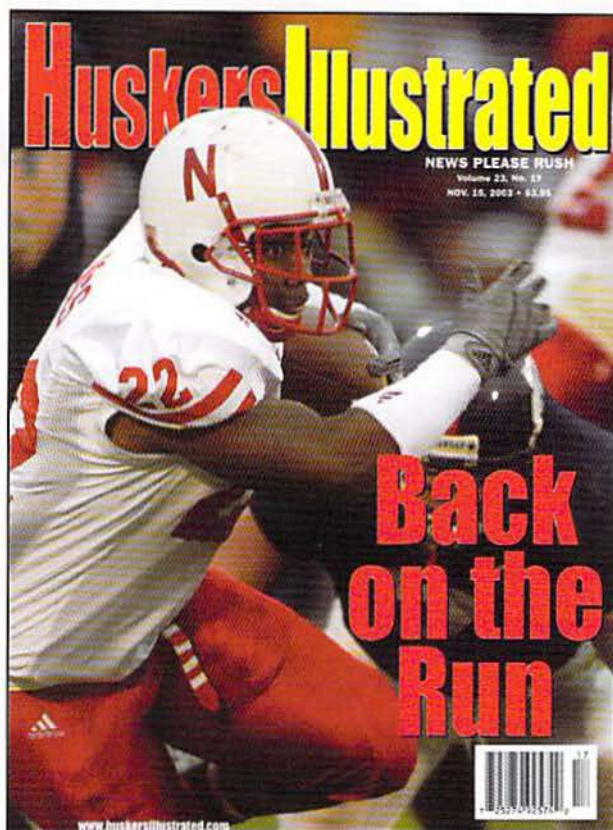
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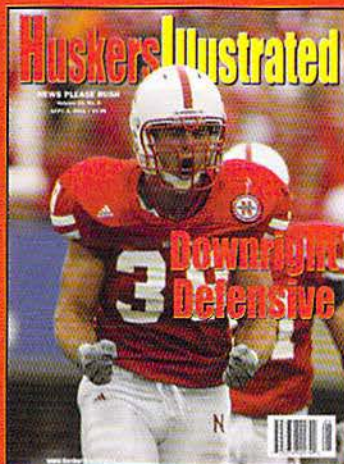
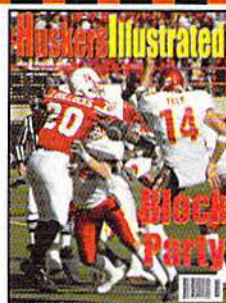


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Having Fun

Huskers benefit from freshman's on-court play, as well as her playful attitude

By Todd Henrichs

Dani Mancuso had only started a handful of matches, and the Nebraska freshman already had a trademark move.

It had nothing to do with her fluid attacks or quirky jump serve, Mancuso's stamp on the Husker volleyball program was how she celebrated a great play.

"She has a little dance," teammate Jennifer Saleaumua said. "We always make fun of her."

Mancuso, a Fab-50 recruit considered one of the top three outside hitters to enter college this season, has made things fun for the Nebraska volleyball team in the most unique of seasons.

The fourth true freshman thrust into a key role, Mancuso's on-court play and playful attitude helped to steady a team rocked by back-to-back conference losses to Kansas State and Missouri. The Huskers rebounded with seven straight wins. And with a late-season victory at rival Kansas State, Nebraska could again capture a Big 12 Conference championship.

That's serious business for a player who'd prefer not to be taken too seriously.

Said Mancuso: "We always play better when we're loose and having fun."

Mancuso had played extensively



True freshman Dani Mancuso has moved into the starting lineup.

in only two matches before an injury to starting right-side player Kelsey Fautsch thrust her into the starting lineup against Georgia Tech in the U.S. Bank/Arby's Classic. Mancuso

was a non-factor, offsetting five kills with five hitting errors in the Huskers' five-game loss to the respected Yellow Jackets.

She saw only sporadic action over

the next month until an illness sidelined Ally Rebholz, the Huskers' other right-side starter. Mancuso played well against Iowa State, producing 11 kills. But the breakthrough came at Texas Tech when Mancuso was summoned off the bench to step in for a struggling Anna Schrad on the left side.

Mancuso produced six kills, served three aces and had a block against the Red Raiders, all signs to NU coaches that she was more comfortable on the left side. When Nebraska came out against Oklahoma in its next match, Mancuso started on the left side, and she stayed in that role as the Huskers beat three consecutive top-25 foes to stay in the race for the conference title.

It was an exciting time for the Omaha Gross Catholic graduate, who admitted some frustration at backing up players on both the right and left side early in the season.

"It was hard coming from playing all the time in high school and all the time in club," Mancuso said, "but I accepted the fact that I had to work

really hard because Jen and Anna were ahead of me.

"I always push myself to get better, and I didn't take one day of practice lightly because there was that one small chance that I could get in to play. Coach (John) Cook always told me to just be ready."

As a left-side starter, Mancuso's role is to play all six rotations in the Huskers' unique two-setter system. Though more demanding physically, Mancuso said it's easier on a young player mentally to be in the game the entire time.

Statistically, Nebraska's offense benefited from having Mancuso in the match. Even with so-so production from Mancuso at the net, the Huskers' overall hitting percentage made gains with her in the lineup. For the first time all season, Nebraska's setters appeared to be in a good rhythm.

"Mancuso is a very good ball handler and passer," Cook said. "We take advantage of her skills, and I think that helps us to be a smoother team."

Mancuso has that reputation as a

steady player with a solid all-around game. In high school, she set a state record with 621 kills her senior year and finished her career with 1,336 kills, eclipsing by almost 300 kills the previous Class B state record set by Schrad at Lincoln Pius X.

Mancuso led Gross Catholic to three appearances in the Nebraska state tournament and played on the Cougars' 1999 championship team. She played with current Husker teammates Dani Busboom and Christina Houghtelling on the Nebraska Juniors' club team.

All that experience is evident in the freshman's mature play, but her enthusiasm is clearly what has benefited the Huskers the most.

"When she came out on the court, I noticed a change in the intensity we had," freshman libero Amanda McCormick said. "She is always fired up and ready to go, ready to cheer and celebrate. That really fires everybody up."

"The more people we can get on the court like that, the more it will help us. It really gives us an extra adrenaline boost." ■

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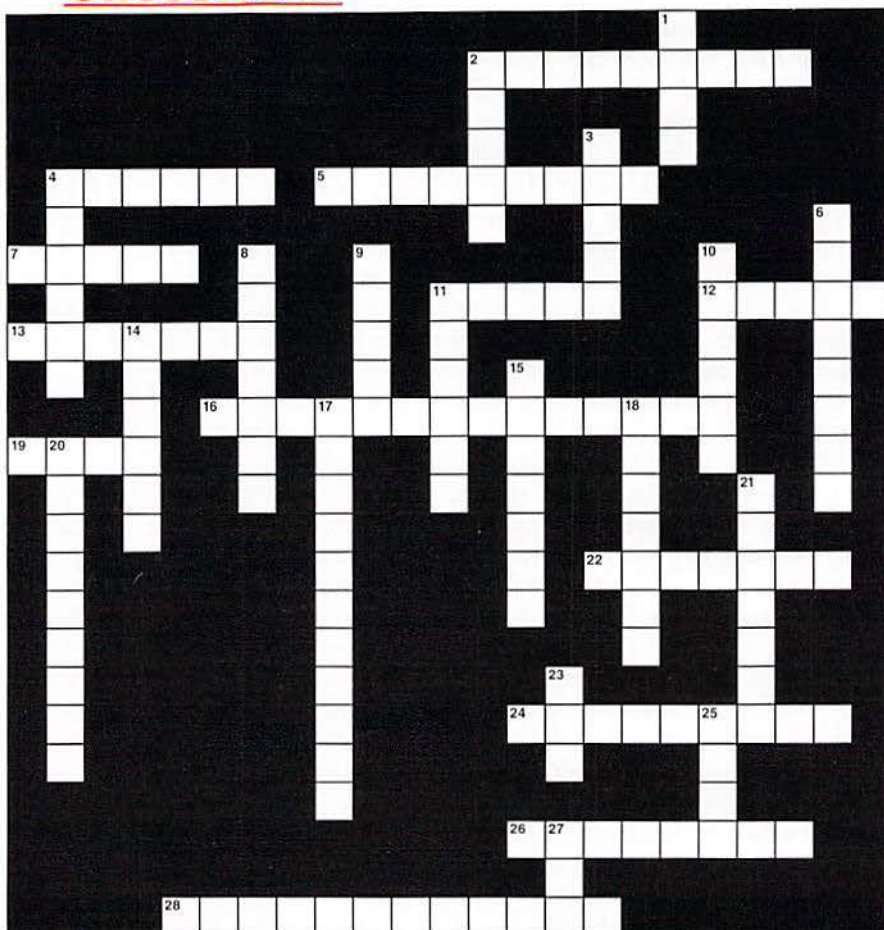
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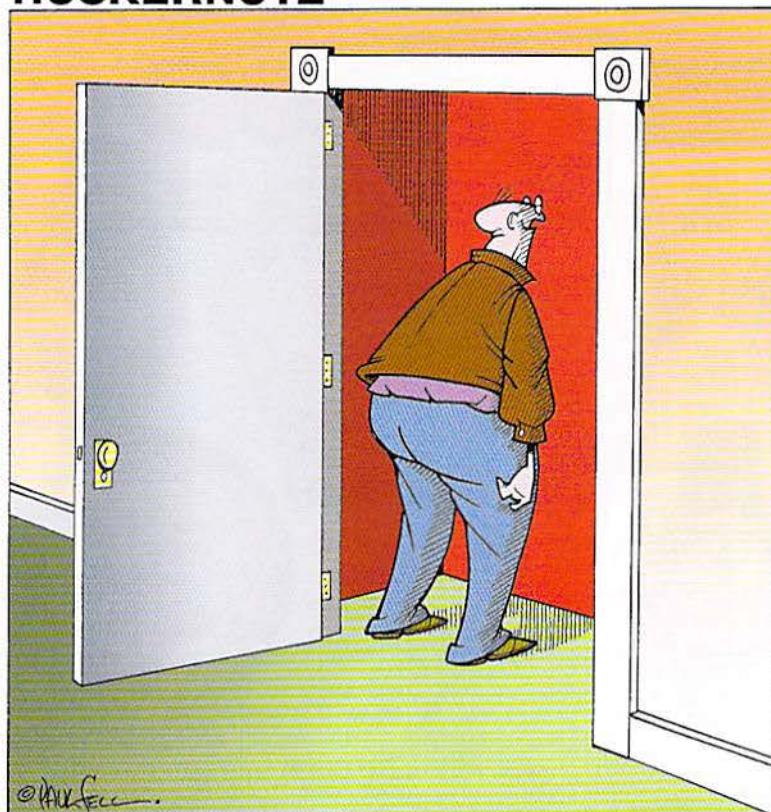
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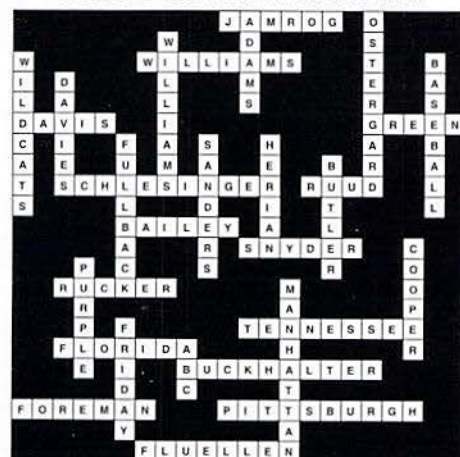
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Playing For Pride

Players, coaches say they'll regroup, get ready to play Colorado



Mike BABCOCK

THE POST-GAME INTERVIEWS were predictably short. But Nebraska made no excuses following its most lopsided loss at home since 1958. "Today they out-played us," weakside linebacker and co-captain Demorrio Williams said. "Today they were the better team."

They were the Kansas State Wildcats, of course, and "they were ready to play," said Williams. "They might have come here to prove a point." And, he added, "They did that."

What they proved on a gray November afternoon was that they were Nebraska's equal, representing a program with which to be reckoned — but not one with more talented players, according to Williams. "By no means," he said. "I don't think so. Talent wise, I don't think so."

Whatever the relative strengths of the teams, Kansas State had big-playmakers in quarterback Ell Roberson, tailback Darren Sproles and wide receiver James Terry.

And the Wildcats played with kind of focus Nebraska has come to expect from Big 12 opponents. "Everybody wants a piece of Nebraska," free safety Josh Bullocks said.

And Kansas State got a big piece of the Cornhuskers, for the second season in a row.

This loss might have been more difficult to take, however, not only because it was at home, on Senior Day, but also because a victory would have been a big step toward the Big 12 title game.

Nebraska hasn't played for the conference championship since 1999. And the opportunity to get there was within the Cornhuskers' grasp, until Kansas State unceremoniously ripped it away.

Less than a week after the first-team defense regained its black practice jerseys, it was shredded for 561 yards, or twice as many as it had been allowing on the average.

Nebraska went into the game ranked eighth nationally in total defense and fourth in scoring defense. But the Blackshirts were no match for Kansas State, particularly in the second half.

The offense also faltered in the second half, gaining only 77 yards after the intermission.

And the special teams broke down, with a blocked field goal that would have given Nebraska a 10-7 halftime lead and maybe even enough momentum to change the game's outcome.

That's speculation, however. The bottom line is, the Cornhuskers are now 8-3 with seemingly less to play for when they go to Colorado to finish their regular-season schedule.

The Colorado game "might not mean a lot, but we have to play for pride," said Cornhusker I-back Cory Ross, who rushed for 87 yards on 16 carries in his first collegiate start.

"Right now it's another game, and a game we have to win."

Ross gained 65 of those yards during the first half, enabling Nebraska to keep the Kansas State defense off-balance by mixing Ross's runs with Jammal Lord's runs and passes.

The play of Ross was "encouraging, that he was productive with the ball," offensive coordinator Barney Cotton said. But when Nebraska fell behind, "it changes your thinking."

Ross carried only four times in the second half.

A victory at Colorado, where the Cornhuskers lost 62-36 two seasons ago, would be the ninth. And a "nine-win season is always important," said Cotton.

"Our entire focus (now) is trying to do our best against Colorado."

A victory there and one in a bowl game would give Nebraska a 10-3 record, something just about anyone would have accepted coming on the heels of last season's 7-7 meltdown.

A 9-4 record would look good in that context, for that matter. But expectations changed after a 5-0 start, which saw the Cornhuskers climb to No. 7 and No. 10 in the national polls.

Even the fourth-quarter disaster at Missouri couldn't diminish those expectations. But a 31-7 loss at Texas combined with what happened against Kansas State has resurrected the debilitating doubt and fan fatalism that were Nebraska's unwanted, and constant, companions last season.

"They're hurt right now. It's a situation where it's tough on them," Solich said of his players. "But there's only one direction you can allow yourself to go."

And he is confident they will take that direction when they begin preparing for Colorado. "Don't think the players quit (against Kansas State)," he said. "I want you to understand that."

That's how it will be preparing for Colorado.

"I hope it's a competitive thing," said Cotton.

It will be, Ross said. "We've just got to move on, just work from here to create things for next year."

"You can't sit and worry about what happened," said Williams. "It hurt but you have to bounce back and play. It's going to be hostile and a tough place to play."

"We have to keep this team together."

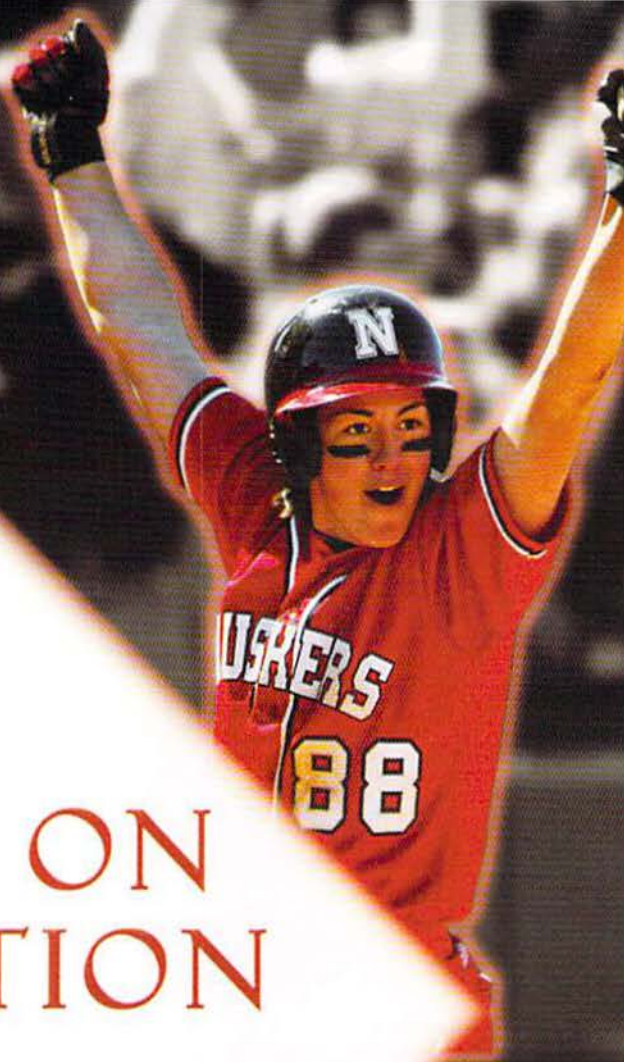
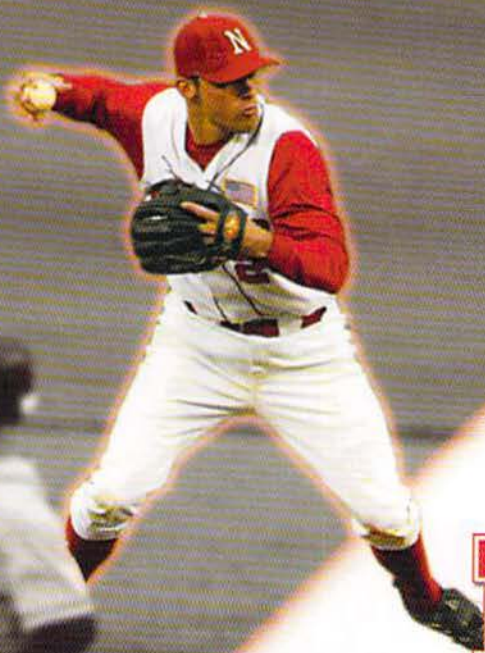
"All is not lost," Cotton said.

As he began a post-game interview, a reporter near him sighed.

"I'm supposed to be the one sighing," he said. ■



I-back Cory Ross gained 65 of his 87 yards in the first half.



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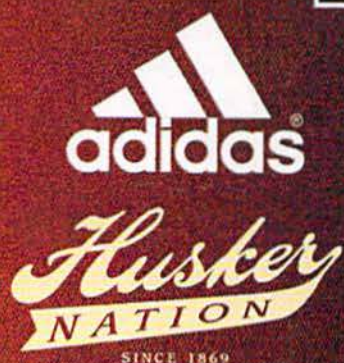
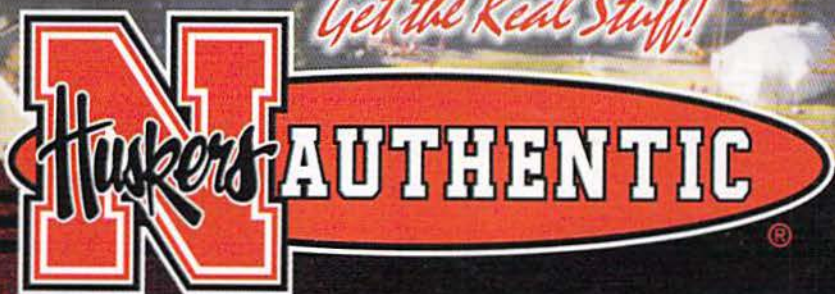
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